

University of Tampere  
School of Social Sciences and Humanities  
MDP in Peace, Mediation and Conflict Research

**Structural Violence in Canada:  
The Role of Winnipeg Educators in Decolonization and Reconciliation  
Between Indigenous and Non-Indigenous Peoples**

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## Abstract

As a result of the colonial history of Canada, and years of imposed structural violence, direct violence and assimilation policies, there is a need for awareness in of how Indigenous peoples have suffered. The history curriculum in schools can be improved, and decolonization and reconciliation can be considered as goals.

This thesis explores the meanings of structural violence, decolonization and reconciliation in the context of Canada, asking what local educators in Winnipeg are doing to promote awareness of these issues in their fields. Using content analysis to analyse and code multiple data sources, this study attempts to uncover what is missing from current education systems in Winnipeg, and what can be done to change this.

After introducing theories education in peacebuilding, decolonization, and the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, the main theories of the study are introduced: structural violence and cultural violence. From five in-depth interviews with educators, five main points of improvement were extracted from the interview data. This was then compared to the Grade 11 “Canadian History” curriculum, and subsequently related to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission’s fourth chapter from the report, “Education for Reconciliation.”

My study finds that some of the main points from the interviews are already present in the provincial curriculum, but all have some space for improvement. Structural violence is indeed a pressing issue in improving the quality of life of Indigenous peoples, and education and awareness of these issues can help to deconstruct the structural violence.

Key words: structural violence, cultural violence, decolonization, Canada, education, reconciliation, Indigenous peoples

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## Introduction

On the surface, Canada may seem like a peaceful oasis of a country. There are few stories of violence that make the news, life expectancy is high, people seem generally happy and nice, many social services – including healthcare – are free to its citizens. Keeping up this image leaves little room for the discussion of violence and injustice which are embedded in society, and does not allow learning about these issues in the average classroom, specifically in relation to the struggles Canadian Indigenous peoples have faced.

## Historical Background

There is a historical trauma that exists in Canada, one perpetuated by colonization and imperialism. The lasting effects of colonization can be seen in government legislation, latent (and overt) racism, and the lack of discussion about Indigenous history in many schools. The legal framework that has existed since the inception of Canada still affects the lives of Indigenous peoples along with their relationship to non-Indigenous Canadians. This situation could be called *structural violence*, or social injustice, as the violence is embedded in the structures and legal frameworks of society. The framework for this relationship began with treaties which gave the Canadian government ownership of the land in exchange for goods such as money, education, hunting rights, and health care.

After the creation of these treaties, residential and day schools were instituted as a means for the forced assimilation –and what the truth commissioners call “cultural genocide”– of Indigenous people (Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada 2015, 19). These schools were funded by the government, but administered largely by religious groups such as the Catholic and Anglican churches. These schools were used as a tool to assimilate Indigenous children by forcibly taking them away from their families and forbidding the practice of traditional languages and customs. Although residential schools existed since the 1830s, the term is usually used in reference to schools created after the 1880s (The Canadian Encyclopedia n.d.). When the last school closed in 1996, approximately 150,000 Indigenous children had attended a residential school (The Canadian Encyclopedia n.d.).

As a result of time spent at residential schools, many Indigenous Canadians have lost touch with their heritage and traditional culture and practices. Languages have been forgotten or neared extinction, traditional practices of things such as healing, conflict resolution have been lost because oral knowledge was not able to be passed down. Families have been torn apart

and there exist children who hardly knew their parents. Residential schools demonstrate the power of education as a tool of colonialism, therefore it is relevant to explore what it would be like to use education as a tool for peace and reconciliation.

The discussion of this trauma is not present in the regular national discourse, which facilitates the ignorance of many Canadians maintain concerning Indigenous issues. Only the recent publication of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's (TRC) report has begun to bring more interest and discussion about Indigenous issues and the historical trauma, racism, and colonialism in Canada. The government mandated Truth and Reconciliation Commission was set up following the 2008 government apology for residential schools, and the six-year commission sought to investigate the effects of the residential school system by interviewing thousands of Indigenous people who were affected by the schools. During the course of the commission, and especially after its culmination, reconciliation has been an important part of the political discourse in Canada. Though reconciliation is being discussed more and more, there are still gaps in the available research on this topic, especially in regard to peace education and decolonization. The TRC made a list of 94 calls to action resulting from the findings in the report. Six of these make reference to the education of Indigenous Canadians. Fifty-two more are directed towards reconciliation in general, four of which are concerning education for reconciliation.

Many of the more negative parts of Canadian history, especially those which relate to the treatment of Indigenous peoples, is left out of school curricula and is therefore not in common public discourse. Canadians are either undereducated or ignorant about these issues, perpetuating a cycle of structural violence. The standard of living for Indigenous Canadians (on and off-reserve) is not in line with the standard of other Canadian residents. The recent publication of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission Report is a step towards reconciliation between different cultural groups of Canadians, but if nothing further is done and the recommendations are not followed then there is a risk that the current momentum may fade away.

Winnipeg, the capital of the province of Manitoba is an important area for the study of decolonization and reconciliation in Canada. There are 195,900 people living in Manitoba that identify as Aboriginal, which accounts for 17% of the provincial population. This is the highest percentage of any province in Canada (Statistics Canada 2016). Of this group of people, 72 335 live in Winnipeg (11% of the city's population), giving Winnipeg the highest

Indigenous population of any major Canadian city (Statistics Canada 2011). This demographic makes Winnipeg an interesting and important location in which to do research about Indigenous issues. Nationally, Indigenous peoples represent only 4% of the population (Statistics Canada 2015), but the higher concentration in Winnipeg gives Winnipeggers a higher probability of interacting with Indigenous peoples than those who live in other major Canadian cities, making it especially important to address the lack of education and discussion about trauma and history concerning Indigenous peoples. However, not enough attention has been given to dealing with these issues given the unique situation of Winnipeg. Manitoba is still lagging behind other provinces in terms of education reform, making it especially imperative to talk about education in Manitoba and working towards reconciliation and undoing structures of violence.

In January 2015, the news magazine *Maclean's* published an article entitled, “Welcome to Winnipeg: Where Canada’s racism problem is at its worst.” The article begins by mentioning some racist comments by prominent city residents and highlighting some recent terrible events where Indigenous people were victims. The article then talks about Winnipeg’s reputation as being friendly and how that can now be reconciled with its racist reputation. The article also follows the heart-breaking story of Tina Fontaine, a 15-year-old aboriginal girl who was found murdered and dumped in a river in Winnipeg. Tina’s story is not unique; similar things have happened to many aboriginal girls in Winnipeg and across Canada. (Macdonald 2015)

Indigenous women and girls are the most vulnerable group to violence in Canada. A national inquiry into the issue was announced in December 2015. Various organizations have published reports and statistics on the issue, but the Royal Canadian Mounted Police report that there is a total of 204 “Unsolved Aboriginal Female Occurrences” in Canada, meaning either unsolved homicide cases or missing Indigenous women (Royal Canadian Mounted Police 2015).

This *Maclean's* article highlighted many of the issues within Winnipeg, and the need for more understanding and respect towards Indigenous peoples in the city. For many Winnipeggers, the article came as a shock and brought awareness to an issue that not everyone was thinking or worried about.

In the news, people can sometimes find stories akin to the one in *Maclean's*, or other stories about violence, racism or protests in relation to Indigenous groups. However, the news does not address the roots of racism, violence, and trauma; it does not discuss the history of Indigenous peoples in Canada and *why* there is such a disparity between the living standards of Indigenous and non-Indigenous Canadians. The section on Education for Reconciliation from the TRC discusses this exact issue early on:

Non-Aboriginal Canadians...have almost no idea how those problems developed. There is little understanding of how the federal government contributed to that reality through residential schools and the policies and laws in place during their existence. Our education system, through omission or commission, has failed to teach this. It bears a large share of the responsibility for the current state of affairs...Canadians have been taught little or nothing about the residential schools (Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada 2015, 118).

The lack of knowledge and understanding about Indigenous issues is one of the root causes of injustice and racism in Canada, but one that is discussed too little. This gap in the broader discussion is especially present in Winnipeg, which has been demonstrated to be an important location for research about reconciliation. There has not been any research done concerning the role of educators in promoting reconciliation between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Winnipeggers, especially in relation to decolonizing and deconstructing structural violence.

Ignorance and racism are also present in the minds of teachers, as was demonstrated in 2014 when a Winnipeg teacher posted racist and ignorant remarks about Indigenous peoples on Facebook. In response to another teacher's online post about reconciliation between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples in Canada, the teacher posted a slew of racist remarks:

Oh Goddd how long are aboriginal people going to use what happened as a crutch to suck more money out of Canadians?

The benefits the aboriginals enjoy from the white man/europeans far outweigh any wrong doings that were done to a concurred [sic] people

Get to work, tear the treaties and shut the FK up already. My ancestor migrated here early 1900's they didn't do anything. Why am I on the hook for their cultural support? (CBC News 2014)

These comments demonstrate a profound lack of understanding of the deeper issues that affect Indigenous peoples today. While this teacher is not a history or social studies teacher, he is still charged with educating and moulding the minds of youth, and should not directly or indirectly be projecting racist ideologies to students.

## Research Question

My research seeks to explore the relationship between education and reconciliation in the context of Winnipeg. More specifically, I will discuss what local educators are doing to promote reconciliation and Indigenous knowledge, especially in response to the TRC report and recommendations. Given the historical trauma of education as a tool for assimilation in the past, my research question asks how can education be decolonized and used as a tool for reconciliation and combating structural violence in Winnipeg.

This thesis will investigate some of the existing research concerning the broader issues at play in this topic. Exploring the theories of structural violence, cultural violence, decolonization and reconciliation will also be an important part in establishing the relevant current research.

My study will draw on previous research, the TRC report, and research from other provinces in Canada concerning the role of education. Though Winnipeg is an important geographical place for this research because of its demographic, little research has been done in the locale. There has been some research and more discussions about Indigenous issues in other larger provinces such as British Columbia and Ontario, but the demographics in those provinces are very different from those in Winnipeg.

## Truth and Reconciliation Commission

Contrary to what many Canadians might believe, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission did not start as a purely government-led initiative. Rather, it was part of the settlement of the biggest class action settlement in Canadian history: the Indian Residential Schools Settlement Agreement. Thousands of residential school survivors assembled together in a lawsuit against the government of Canada, and part of the settlement of that lawsuit was for the government to begin a truth and reconciliation commission.

The former residential school students did not desire a purely monetary compensation for the wrongs they had experienced during their stay in residential schools, and therefore the TRC was established, with a mandate “to gather the written and oral history of residential schools



and to work toward reconciliation between former students and the rest of Canada” (Curry 2015). The trauma experienced by these students were not just about being banned from speaking their native language, practicing their culture, or being taken away from their families and communities, but many who attended residential schools were victims of sexual and physical abuse, and many died from diseases or malnutrition. The purpose of the TRC was to listen to these survivors and record their stories as a way towards finding more of the truth of what happened in Residential Schools. The purpose of this and the hope of the commission is “to guide and inspire Aboriginal peoples and Canadians in a process of reconciliation and renewed relationships that are based on mutual understanding and respect” (Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada n.d.). The commission began with a five-year mandate, but it was later prolonged to last six years (Curry 2015), with the final report being published in 2015.

The TRC hosted seven events across Canada to hear from former residential school students and to raise awareness about the work of the commission, which was the chief means of listening to survivors from different parts of the country.

The TRC published their report about Canada’s residential schools in six volumes: (1) The History, (2) The Inuit and Northern Experience, (3) The Métis Experience, (4) Missing Children and Unmarked Burials, (5) The Legacy, and (6) Reconciliation. Each volume draws from records and testimonials that the commission gathered over the course of their mandate, but for my research I will be focusing on volume six, *Reconciliation*, and within that, the fourth chapter, *Education for reconciliation*. Alongside the full report, the TRC also published a summary of the report, as well as a separate document containing all 94 “Calls to Action.” These calls to action summarize the report and point to specific things that the commission believes needs to be changed in Canada in order to promote reconciliation and foster truth.

The recent TRC is not the first investigation into the situation of Indigenous peoples in Canada and their relationship with the government and other Canadians. The Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples (RCAP) lasted from 1991 until 1996, and its purpose was to “to investigate and propose solutions to the challenges affecting the relationship between Aboriginal peoples (First Nations, Inuit, Métis), the Canadian government and Canadian society as a whole” (Library and Archives Canada n.d.). The RCAP acknowledged that there have been a lot of wrongs committed concerning Indigenous peoples, and that there needs to

be change. One major difference to note between the RCAP and the TRC is that the RCAP sought to investigate challenges and effects from various policies concerning Indigenous peoples, such as the Royal Proclamation of 1763, the Indian Act, and treaties. The TRC, on the other hand, focuses on the experiences of Indigenous peoples in residential schools and the intergenerational effects of that. Since my research is to focus on education rather than all policies that affect Indigenous peoples, I will be looking at the TRC report rather than the RCAP report.

### Canadian Education System

A general understanding of the Canadian education system will benefit the comprehension of the reader of this thesis. While the general structure of education is the same across the whole country, the specific course and curriculum decisions are left to the provinces to decide for themselves. This means that a student's education can vary greatly depending on the province in which province he/she is educated. As well, the structure of education in Québec differs from other Canadian provinces.

Generally, students in Canada begin their studies at age 5 in Kindergarten, proceeding to Grade 1 at age 6, and continuing to Grade 12 which students usually complete by age 17 or 18. In Manitoba the grades are grouped into "early years" (Kindergarten to Grade 4), "middle years" (Grade 5 to Grade 8), and "senior years" (Grade 9 to Grade 12), with senior years being commonly referred to as "high school." The required ages for children to attend school in Manitoba is from age 7 until age 18, and the child's parent or guardian is responsible for the child's education (Government of Manitoba n.d. B).

In Early Years, teachers are recommended to spend about 10% of the year teaching social studies. This number rises to 13% in the Middle Years recommendations (Government of Manitoba n.d. A). In Senior Years, students are required to take one social studies course each year from Grade 9 to Grade 11, with no required social studies course in Grade 12. This means that students in Manitoba take a minimum of 3 social studies courses throughout the 30 courses they need to graduate from high school.

In Manitoba, the required social studies course in Grade 11 is a history class called "History of Canada." This course is mandatory for Grade 11 students, and since students in Manitoba are legally required to remain in school until the age of 18, this course is likely to be taken by the majority of youth in Manitoba. Grade 11 is the only time that Manitoba students have a

course dedicated to the history of Canada; in other grades it might be a unit in general social studies course that incorporates various disciplines such as history, geography, etc.

## Literature Review

### Education and (Understanding) History

Education is an integral part of many peacebuilding theories, consequently, a peace theory concerning historical education is important. Jarem Sawatsky's re-envisioning of John Paul Lederach's integrative framework is one such theory. Sawatsky suggests that the field of peacebuilding has a "future bias," and argues that we should recognize many conceptions of time instead of focusing on a purely western sense of time (Sawatsky 2005, 123). Sawatsky argues this future bias constrains peace processes, especially in societies that have been destabilized by long-lasting conflict. For Sawatsky this is "not a 'going back to the good old days,' but rather creating time and space to revisit history to see what sources of conflict and resources for peace might emerge" (Sawatsky 2005, 124). Furthermore, Sawatsky argues that a "linear future-oriented timeframe is one of the biggest tools of oppression of Indigenous peoples" (Sawatsky 2005, 128-129).

In his paper, Sawatsky names three different types of history that are part of his revised framework: ephemeral history, conjunctural history, and structural history. Ephemeral history is recently experienced history, and in this time period, the focus of peacebuilding is "on taking responsibility" (Sawatsky 2005, 125). Sawatsky describes conjectural history as consisting of symbolic events, adding that "Colonization marks the beginning of conjectural history for many groups. It is the place where their own identity story was disrupted. It is to this place that they must return if there is to be peace or justice" (Sawatsky 2005, 125). Therefore, this history, this place needs to be talked about, and there needs to be awareness and education about this history in order for people to return to this place. However, as Sawatsky points out, a return to the beginning of conjectural history does not mean going back to how life was then, but means returning to where the history was disrupted in order to rebuild an identity in the present (Sawatsky 2005, 125-126). This idea of returning to the beginning of conjectural history in order to move forward also ties into the idea of decolonization. The purpose of education, decolonization and learning history are not for the purpose of going back and forgetting what has happened, but are a way to process and understand what happened in the past in order to reconstruct meaning and identity as a way forward. The third type of history is structural history, which goes back the furthest in history. According to Sawatsky, "Structural history is about returning to the teachings of the ancestors...Returning to the teachings means going back to that that has been tested through

centuries, so that we might find resources of just peace and that we might challenge sources of injustice” (Sawatsky 2005, 126). All three of these histories are important in constructing a time frame in which education brings an awareness of deeper, structural issues and how these affect identity building in the present.

Sawatsky continues by emphasizing the importance of the renegotiating history, healing traditions, narrative, multiple timeframes, and collective responses. By discussing these things in the context of peacebuilding, Sawatsky demonstrates to the reader the importance of learning and understanding history in a conflict setting. Peacebuilding (and reconciliation) is not just about a commitment to improving the future, but working towards using and understanding the past as a tool for reconciliation. Consequently, education about history becomes a tool integral to the peacebuilding process. Sawatsky’s final point asserts that there is a need to move from an individualistic understanding of history (our own personal memory and vision), to a more collective understanding. Incorporating collectiveness and broadening the timeframe means “When we open ourselves to have the future and past inform the present we draw from the wisdom of peoples long past and peoples yet to come. We are pushed out of an individualistic worldview to one that must give space for collective understandings of life” (Sawatsky 2005, 130). In this understanding of a peacebuilding framework, looking to the past is more collective and holistic because it involves many more people than a singular story of history. If the future and the past inform the present, then an accurate historical education is necessary for acknowledging past harms as well as learning about injustices of the past.

Rauna Kuokkanen’s book, *Reshaping the University* is another relevant work, especially in relation to ignorance in education concerning Indigenous peoples. In regards to ignorance in the field of education, Kuokkanen writes, “Many different inequalities – including institutional, structural, power, economic, and epistemic – have helped construct and reinforce disparate relations in the academy” (Kuokkanen 2008, 6). Kuokkanen’s first chapter frames Indigenous episteme as a gift that can be given to the academic world. In her second chapter, Kuokkanen discusses the difficulties that Indigenous peoples face in a university/academic setting, stating that “It seems that the highly competitive, institutionalized environment of the academy can be a challenge for anyone. But for those who do not share the cultural, intellectual, and epistemic conventions that the university represents and reproduces, it is a different kind of struggle” (Kuokkanen 2008, 50). However,

Kuokkanen's focus is on incorporating Indigenous styles of teaching more so than incorporating Indigenous narratives and history to education.

Other scholars have recently published on the topic of Indigenous education in Canada. For example, Susan Dion reflects on Prime Minister Justin Trudeau's swearing in ceremony as an important step forward because of his inclusion of Indigenous culture (Dion 2016, 468). Dion also discusses the difficulties that Indigenous students face in the classroom on top of the long distances some have to travel to attend school if they live on a reserve (Dion 2016, 469). Regarding classroom curricula specifically, Dion writes that "What is and is not taught in Canadian classrooms concerns me a great deal" (Dion 2016, 469). However, Dion does not elaborate on this idea in significant detail. As a professor of education, Dion writes about the struggles that her students face while learning to become a teacher and the pressure they face to incorporate Indigenous perspectives in their future curricula without ever learning how they should go about doing that (Dion 2016, 470). According to Dion, part of the problem may be the fears that teachers have in teaching something unfamiliar, or something that is contrary to prevailing narratives. Dion writes,

teachers have a genuine fear of saying and or doing the wrong thing, of being accused of appropriation, of getting it wrong. Equally strong is the fear of disrupting dominant narratives including the national narrative of Canada the good and the personal narrative of meritocracy that allows people to believe me and my family we are good Canadians, we worked hard that's why we're successful. The fear of confronting the ways in which one's wealth and privilege are implicated in the oppression of Indigenous people is powerful and difficult to interrogate (Dion 2016, 470).

Indeed, it is difficult for people to learn the truth about something that is discussed so little with historical accuracy. Confronting one's own privilege and power are difficult things, and therefore difficult for teachers to address. However, just because they are difficult does not mean that teachers (or other Canadians) should shy away from teaching or learning about these aspects of history, and should be open to alternate narratives. As Canada continues to become more and more multicultural, confronting and acknowledging privilege become increasingly important. As well, the importance of learning about the struggles of other cultures increases, as does cultural fluency. Acknowledging and understanding how power or privilege grant advantage to some Canadians over others is important as the country becomes more multicultural.

Dion has also published a report on what is being taught to Education students about Métis history and culture in Ontario, titled *Our Place in the Circle*. While it seems as though Indigenous education is being discussed in Ontario, it is still important for other provinces to re-evaluate what they are teaching, since the issues of Indigenous peoples can differ from province to province.

There has been some research on education about Indigenous history done in the province of Ontario, which neighbours Manitoba. Godlewska, Moore and Bednasek's article, "Cultivating ignorance of Aboriginal realities," describes how provincial curricula are perpetuating marginalization. They discuss some historical moments when Aboriginal issues were ignored, from the Royal Proclamation of 1763 to Trudeau's 1969 white paper, as well as how ignorance in general is perpetuated in Canadian schools. The researchers of the article also did a review of the Ontario curriculum for Grades 1 to 12, assessing the mentions of Aboriginal issues. They found that the grade with the highest percentage of Aboriginal content is Grade 6 at 20%, while all the other grades contain significantly less content (5% or less). The article also identifies ignorance as "a powerful social force" (2010). Education is about creating awareness about certain issues, therefore, for people to be aware about the historical and current issues that Indigenous peoples face, then there must be accurate education about these issues.

Indigenous education in Manitoba is discussed by Anita Olsen Harper and Shirley Thompson (2017), although not from the angle of decolonization and reconciliation. Harper and Thompson write about the huge and widening disparity in high school completion rates between Indigenous and non-Indigenous students, which in 2016 was 55% compared to 96% (Harper and Thompson 2017, 42-43). According to the authors, the lower rate of graduation among Indigenous students is due to the "structural oppressions" that Indigenous students face, namely "poverty, suppression of their identities, racism and gender violence" (Harper and Thompson 2017, 41). They argue that if these four things could be addressed, then perhaps the disparity between Indigenous and non-Indigenous high school completion rates would shrink.

The trauma and structural violence experienced by Indigenous peoples in Canada is deeply rooted in the past. Therefore, a peacebuilding strategy must take the past into account, as well as looking towards the future. These ideas and theories show that going back to historical trauma is an integral part of moving forward. Sawatsky's ideas demonstrate that learning

about the past in an educational setting could be vital to reconciliation in Canada. Ideas presented from other scholar such as Dion, and Olsen and Harper can be applied more to the educational injustice that exists in Manitoba. Part of the problem in Canada is that people do not know or understand the colonial history or the racist marginalization that Indigenous peoples have faced. Children and adults in Canada need to learn more about the history of Canada and the injustices done to Indigenous peoples, but currently there is much to be improved in the educational system.

## Colonialism and Decolonization

An influential scholar on colonialism, Gayatri Spivak wrote the conclusive article, *Can the Subaltern Speak?*, which questions whether subaltern, marginalized, and colonial classes of people –the non-elite– have a voice in society. In the case of women as subalterns, Spivak argues that in a colonial understanding of historiography, the male gender prevails over the female, and if the context is colonial then “the subaltern has no history and cannot speak, the subaltern as female is even more deeply in shadow” (Spivak 1988, 82-83). Spivak expands on the thinking of many philosophers, adding her own critiques and views on the ideas of sovereignty, states, colonialism, and epistemic violence, among other notions. As an answer to her question, “can the subaltern speak?” Spivak makes the statement, “White men are saving brown women from brown men,” (Spivak 1988, 92) as a beginning to her investigation. By expanding on this idea, and explaining some instances in which white men attempt to save brown women from brown men, she explains/proves that the subaltern woman cannot speak; that the white man speaks for her. In their attempts to abolish cultural practices such as the Indian self-immolation widow sacrifice *sati*, white men are not saving or protecting brown women from brown men, but taking away their choice, their voice. In general, the colonial routine of making traditional Indigenous rituals practices illegal does not save them from themselves, but takes away the voice and the cultural expression of the Indigenous subaltern. Spivak asserts that she is not an advocate for killing, but the point of her argument is recognizing freedom of choice. In the British reaction to the “case of widow self-immolation, ritual is not being redefined as superstition but as *crime*” [emphasis original] (Spivak 1988, 97). After a careful examination and unpacking of subaltern issues, as an answer to her title question, Spivak concludes that “[t]he subaltern cannot speak” (Spivak 1988, 104). If it is the case that a subaltern cannot speak, then it makes one wonder how decolonization can happen if the colonized subaltern has no voice in the process. Therefore, the Indigenous subaltern’s voice must be present in research concerning decolonization, and



their perspectives must always be considered. This, however, is not the normal practice of many politicians, policy-makers, and educators around the country.

Decolonization is an important concept that is applicable to many areas of society and contexts. One key context in the broad field of decolonization is conflict resolution. Polly Walker argues that Western practices of conflict resolution are not appropriate for all cultures, and that the perpetual use of Western methods neglects to incorporate Indigenous worldviews (Walker 2004, 527). One crucial difference between worldviews that Walker points out is that Indigenous styles of conflict resolution tend to “address the conflict in ways that heal relationships and restore harmony to the group” whereas “Western conflict resolution methods prioritize reaching an agreement between individual parties over mending relationships” (Walker 2004, 528).

Walker emphasizes the importance of worldview in conflict transformation, a concept that can also be applied to education. The same things that make multicultural conflict resolution difficult, also make education in a multicultural setting difficult. Walker argues that “Western models of conflict resolution neither acknowledge nor accommodate differences in culture, claiming their techniques ‘cut across culture’” (Walker 2004, 528).

The ideas of colonialism and decolonization are important, since the topic of decolonizing education is immersed in Canadian (post)colonial society. The book *Political Theories of Decolonization* provides an introduction to the idea of decolonization, and is important for understanding the importance and connection of decolonization in relation to other peace theories. Anticolonial and decolonization movements highlight and struggle against “the unequal distribution of power in the world” (Kohn and McBride 2011). Decolonization theories also acknowledge that the voice of the colonized have been undermined or ignored by the colonizers (Kohn and McBride 2011, 4). In the context of this research, decolonization is an attempt for a society to come to terms with its legacy.

Colonization and decolonization are all about power, and the balance or imbalance of the phenomenon. Colonial societies have unequal power structures, and the idea of decolonization is addressing and working towards balancing the unequal power that exists in a society. However, this process is difficult and takes time, and it is important for all facets of power to be addressed in order to create equity and balance in a postcolonial society.

However, understanding colonialism in a Canadian context is not as straightforward as in other postcolonial countries, such as India. While Canada was established as a colony of England –and is still a dominion of England in the Commonwealth– it has not had an independence movement or any specific event that would render it *postcolonial*. Part of the issue in the Canadian context is that people do not always perceive Indigenous peoples as colonized and repressed. This is a problem because it means that people will not work towards decolonizing Canadian society and equalizing the imbalance of power. Howard A. Doughty argues that postcolonialism in Canada is a “contested concept” since it “is unlike countries such as Peru, Congo, Iraq, India, and Malaysia whose Indigenous populations were politically repressed and economically exploited during long periods of alien cultural domination” (Doughty 2005). While the Indigenous population in Canada was not repressed and exploited in the same way as in other countries mentioned in the article, Canadian Indigenous peoples were –and are currently– politically repressed, and economically (and environmentally) exploited. Yes, other European immigrants were not mistreated by colonial powers. If the past and current treatment of Canadian Indigenous peoples is taken into account, it is difficult to see how postcolonialism can be considered a “contested concept.” Except if the argument is made that since “alien cultural domination” has not subsided, *postcolonialism* cannot be used to describe the phenomenon. The analysis of postcolonialism concerning this project sees the Indigenous population as the oppressed and colonized people, and the settlers and other colonists as the colonial power.

These theories and literature concerning decolonization, colonialism, defining postcolonialism are important when addressing issues concerning Indigenous peoples in Canada. Since Canada is a postcolonial country, the impacts of colonization must be understood in order to understand what is needed to decolonize Canadian society. Since decolonization is primarily about addressing power imbalances, it is important for these issues to be brought to attention. In Canadian society, there is a distinct imbalance of power between the settler and Indigenous communities, which therefore requires that attention be brought to this imbalance of power.

Spivak points out that colonial powers have outlawed many traditional Indigenous practices in their colonized territories. In Canada, the choice and freedom of Indigenous peoples was taken away when the government outlawed the practice of many traditional ceremonies and rituals, and did not allow the use of Indigenous languages, especially in residential schools.

Reconciliation in Canada, or repairing a relationship needs to be done with a decolonized approach to conflict resolution. The broken relationship between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Canadians has been acknowledged to an extent, and some efforts have been made to work towards reconciliation, such as the 2008 government apology, and the recently completed Truth and Reconciliation Commission. While it could be argued that the TRC has been working towards relationships and harmony, the actions of the government following the apology have not demonstrated a desire for those things. There have been little perceived efforts to work on restoring relationships, and many would see the apology as an empty gesture.

A feminist understanding of colonization is extremely salient in the Canadian context, since Indigenous women were (and still are) oppressed and marginalized far more than Indigenous men (and non-Indigenous women). In Canada, Indigenous peoples, and especially Indigenous women have little to no voice, and are considerably more marginalized than other Canadians, or even many immigrants. By excluding much if Indigenous history from Canadian curricula, Indigenous peoples are silenced and if no one knows their stories, then there is no one to speak on their behalf. Historically, Indigenous women who married non-Indigenous men lost their Indigenous status, whereas Indigenous men who married non-Indigenous women did not face this problem. Many issues concerning Indigenous women have been ignored for a long time, but the federal government's recent creation of an inquiry into murdered and missing Indigenous women is a step in the right direction. The rate of violence against Indigenous women is far higher than any other social demographic in Canada, making the inquiry important, as well as continued exploration to the roots of conflict and violence that all Indigenous peoples face.

Issues with various minority groups might share similarities with the structural violence faced by Indigenous peoples. Using the lens of decolonization with Indigenous peoples acknowledges the past violence from colonization that not all minority groups have been confronted with. The history of colonization imposed different structures of violence and power imbalances on Indigenous peoples in Canada than are faced by minority groups.

### Truth and Reconciliation Commission

The TRC report outlines how school textbooks have failed to accurately tell the history of Indigenous peoples, providing Canadians with false information and not helping them

understand the root of the problems that Indigenous people in Canada face. The “Education for Reconciliation” section of the TRC report has four relevant points for my research:

63. We call upon the Council of Ministers of Education, Canada to maintain an annual commitment to Aboriginal education issues, including:

- i. Developing and implementing Kindergarten to Grade Twelve curriculum and learning resources on Aboriginal peoples in Canadian history, and the history and legacy of residential schools.
- ii. Sharing information and best practices on teaching curriculum related to residential schools and Aboriginal history.
- iii. Building student capacity for intercultural understanding, empathy, and mutual respect.
- iv. Identifying teacher-training needs relating to the above. (Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada 2015)

Since the publication of the TRC, little research has been done linking the report and current education curricula, leaving a gap that I hope my research will fill. I want to link theories of peace education, decolonization and reconciliation with the TRC report and recommendations.

# Theoretical Framework

I rely on a number of theories to facilitate the discussion of my research for this thesis. Taking into account what can be gleaned from the ideas of education, history, colonialism and decolonization that I have discussed previously, I will present one minor theory (Adam Curle's progression of conflict) and two major theories (Johan Galtung's theories of structural and cultural violence).

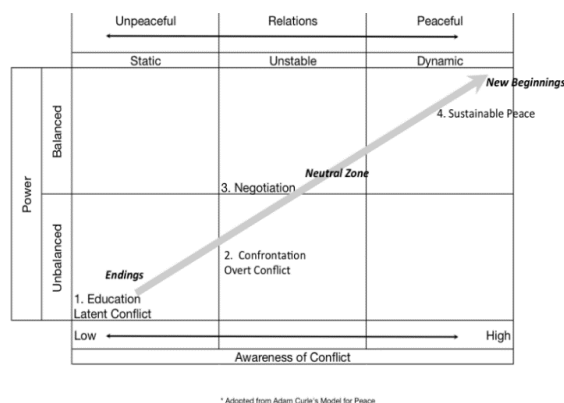


Figure 1

Adam Curle's progression of conflict theory incorporates education and acknowledges that balanced power is necessary for creating sustainable peace. Since this theory incorporates education as a stepping stone to more balanced, sustainable peace, it is a good theory in the framework of my research. In Curle's model (see Figure 1), education is an important step for progressing from latent conflict and making people more aware of the conflict situation. The power imbalance can be linked to decolonization theories that argue against unbalanced power. According to Lederach (1995, 14), "[Curle's] framework suggests that education, advocacy, and mediation share the goal of change and restructuring unpeaceful relationships." Awareness of the issues and structural violence that exist within Canadian society is important in the movement towards reconciliation with Indigenous peoples.

## Structural Violence

One crucial theory in the discussion of decolonization and reconciliation is *structural violence*. It is a theory first presented by the influential peace scholar, Johan Galtung. In his founding paper on structural violence, Galtung first presents six dimensions of violence which facilitate the understanding of different kinds of violence. For Galtung these six dimensions are: (1) physical and psychological, (2) negative and positive, (3) an object is hurt or not, (4) a subject who acts or not, (5) intended or unintended, and (6) manifest and latent (1969, 169-172). Galtung argues that some aspects of these dimensions are personal, and others are structural. This idea is nicely visualized in his paper (see Figure 2).

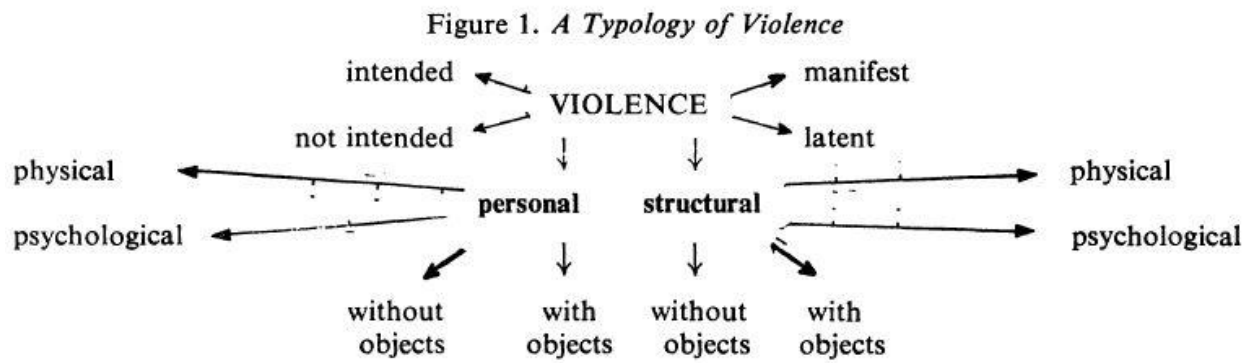


Figure 2

Since there are many types of violence, consequently there are many strategies in which to ameliorate this violence. Galtung proceeds to warn his reader that although personal violence is more noticeable and structural violence is quieter, it does not necessitate that structural violence is not as harmful than personal violence (1969, 173). For Galtung, “structural violence is inequality, above all in the distribution of power,” and therefore to rectify the structural violence this question must be posed: “which factors, apart from personal violence and the threat of personal violence, tend to uphold inequality?” (1969, 175).

Drawing from Galtung, Fischer describes the four basic human needs (survival, economic well-being, freedom, identity) as well as the four main types of violence:

Direct violence (hurting and killing people with weapons), structural violence I (the slow death from hunger, preventable diseases and other suffering caused by unjust structures of society), structural violence II (deprivation from freedom of choice and from participation in decisions that affect people’s own lives) and cultural violence (the justification of direct and structural violence through nationalism, racism, sexism and other forms of discrimination and prejudice). (Fischer 2007)

Galtung defines structural or indirect violence as cases in which there is no actor that directly commits the violence (1969, 170), proceeding to say that “[structural] violence is built into the structure and shows up as unequal power and consequently as unequal life chances.”

For Galtung, structural violence can sometimes be interchanged with the phrase social injustice (1969, 171), which is a term that could be more easily understood by persons outside the field of peace studies. Generally, people may more often equate the word *violence*

with what Galtung would call *direct violence*, but the word injustice is more easily understood when connected to structural and socio-political issues/violence.

Since human needs are under threat from both personal/direct violence and structural violence, peace scholars have also written about the relationship between human needs and structural violence. Drawing on the work of needs theorists, peace psychologist Daniel Christie argues that identity groups are important since those who share an identity, or identify with a government will have a better rapport with the government than those who do not, leading to the possibility of conflict (1997, 316). In many postcolonial countries, the governments in power do not share an identity with the local Indigenous population, which leads to conflict in many cases.

According to Christie, peace psychologists are also interested in the structural violence manifested in political repression and voice (1997, 324). He goes on to describe how this has occurred already in gender specific violence, such as the “masculinization of wealth,” the disregarding of females in spaces dedicated to policy creation (1997, 324). Christie also argues that another example is the prohibition of African Americans in the United States 250 years ago in chances to increase wealth, such as acquiring land (1997, 324). The same thing could also be said about Indigenous peoples and other non-European immigrants in the United States and Canada, as they were not given the same opportunities for land and economic wealth as Caucasian European immigrants. These minorities groups are underrepresented in political governing bodies, creating a system of repression and also limiting their voice in these same political arenas.

### Structural Violence in the Canadian Context

The geographical base for my research is Canada, and since there is not often direct violence in Canada, I will be focusing on the other three types of violence: structural violence I & II, and cultural violence. These three types of violence are prevalent in Canada, if one considers to look beyond the surface. The ways that each of these types of violence are present in Canadian society will be explained, and then how education could be a primary step in the struggle to decolonize and working towards a more positive peace, rather than the negative peace and structural violence we have now.

Looking at the numbers, the unequal life chances that Canadian Indigenous peoples face is staggering. Suicide rates are something that would fall under the basic human need category of survival, and there are a number of different structural factors that could influence these

rates. Suicide rates are significantly higher in the Indigenous population compared to the non-Indigenous population. For example, 22% of First Nations adults report having had suicidal thoughts at some point in their life compared to 9% of non-Indigenous Canadians. The suicide rate among Indigenous males is 126 per 100,000, compared to 24 among non-Indigenous males. While the female rate is lower, the First Nations rate is still much higher than the non-Indigenous rate; 35 compared to 5 (Shulman and Tahirali 2016).

Many Canadians groan over the fact that Indigenous peoples are entitled to “free” education as a result of treaty agreements. But if Indigenous students have such a benefit, then why do so few graduate from high school or attain post-secondary diplomas compared to their non-Indigenous counterparts? Some would say that Indigenous students just don’t care about education, that they don’t try, and it is the lack of effort that leads to unequal opportunities in life.

Firstly, many Indigenous students were forcibly taken from their families and put into residential schools from the 1890s to the 1980s. This traumatic educational experience destroyed families and it did not help parents encourage their kids to finish high school. As well, Indigenous education is the responsibility of the federal government (instead of provincial for all non-Indigenous students), and Indigenous students receive significantly less funding than non-Indigenous students. Additionally, if an Indigenous child goes to school on a reserve, then the educational barriers are even more significant. A child may have to travel a long way to a middle school or high school, since they are not present on every reserve. Some may have the choice to go to a nearby city, but that means choosing between family and cultural identity, or educational prospects.

According to the Canadian National Household Survey in 2011, 29.1% of Indigenous peoples have no high school education or higher. This number increases to 47.2% when it applies to First Nations living on reserve, and increases again to 48.5% of Inuit peoples. On the other hand, only 12.1% non-Indigenous Canadians have no high school education or higher. In the category of higher education, 48.2% of all Indigenous peoples have received a postsecondary certificate, diploma or degree, in comparison to 64.7% of non-Indigenous peoples (Statistics Canada 2015).

In Manitoba, the rates differ from the Canadian average. Overall 77.3% of students who began high school in 2012 graduated on time in 2016. For non-Indigenous students, the rate is 86.2%, but only 47.6% for Indigenous students (Government of Manitoba n.d. C). There is



a staggering gap in education and an abundance of structural issues if nearly 40% fewer Indigenous students graduate on time compared to non-Indigenous students.

Galtung's notion of structural violence and his distinctions between different types of violence can be used as a lens for looking at structural issues in Canada. One distinction that Galtung makes (besides structural and direct violence) is between intended and unintended violence. For Galtung this is important in cases in which guilt must be decided, since the governing structures whose mandate it is to catch or punish intended violence will often be unsuccessful in addressing structural violence as well (1969, 171-172). This idea is also important in the Canadian case. In some ways, it may be difficult now to distinguish between intended and unintended violence against Indigenous peoples since it has been such a longstanding issue. Many of these original violent structures are still in place, and they perpetuate the first cases of intended violence. However, if there are no new violent structures, then have we moved to an unintended violence? Or, since we have not removed the violent and unjust systems, are we still acting with intended violence?

Galtung's fear of not addressing structural violence when intended violence is punished has been true in many cases in Canada. Residential Schools in Canada are an obvious example of longstanding intended violence against Indigenous peoples. In 2008, the government made an official apology to those who were forced into Residential Schools and for the mistreatment they faced. Residential School survivors were even given monetary compensation for the trauma they experienced. In this particular case, intended violence was addressed, and victims were compensated. However, the structural violence that still exists in the aftermath of the intended violence has yet to be fully addressed. The intended violence was punished in a legal sense, but giving survivors money for their trauma does not help to right the social injustice that still exists.

Human needs theory is also important in the discussion of structural violence. As noted by Christie (1997), identity is an important factor. There are few Indigenous people represented in the Canadian federal government, therefore it is unlikely that the groups would identify with each other. If the lawmakers and creators of national structures do not identify with a certain group of people (in this case, Indigenous peoples), then it is not surprising that there are many significant structures in place that are a detriment to the quality of life for Indigenous peoples.

## Cultural Violence

Cultural violence is another important theoretical concept for my research. Understanding the nature of culture and how culture can separate people is an important step in cross-cultural reconciliation, such as with Indigenous and non-Indigenous Canadians. Culture does not necessarily have to do with ethnic origins or nationhood. Sometimes culture can be something less obvious, such as generational culture, gender culture, or departmental culture (LeBaron and Pillay 2006, 16). Our culture defines who we are and how we will act in a given situation, therefore it is important to understand the role that culture plays in conflict and violence. Drawing from the work of Hall and Hofstede, LeBaron and Pillay discuss six dimensions, or starting points, of culture: (1) high context – low context, (2) individualism – communitarianism, (3) universalism – particularism, (4) specificity – diffuseness, (5) sequential time – synchronous time, and (6) low power distance – high power distance (2006, 32-33). The purpose of these starting points is to begin to give someone a glimpse into what distinctions different cultures may have. They are not fixed, and all of the starting points may not be present in all cases (2006, 33)

In a multicultural context such as Canada, *cultural fluency* is an important skill and concept to understand. Tatsushi Arai (in LeBaron & Pillay, 2006) defines cultural fluency as “our readiness to anticipate, internalize, express, and help shape the process of meaning-making” (58). According to Arai, this process helps us to anticipate scenarios, be conscious of embedded cultural influences, express our assumptions, and constructively navigate different cultural dynamics (LeBaron and Pillay 2006, 58). Arai does not assume that a person can arrive in a new cultural context fully versed in the existing norms and customs, nor that one can avoid all awkward inter-cultural experiences by memorizing the aspects of cultural fluency. Instead, Arai suggests that self-awareness is the key, and if one is aware of one’s own notions around anticipation, embeddedness, assumptions, and navigations then it is possible to begin a journey towards cultural fluency (LeBaron and Pillay 2006, 81).

If a person is aware of his or her own assumptions and embeddedness, then it facilitates any interaction with a person of another cultural background, and therefore assists in alleviating cultural violence. In Canada there are many different cultures and nationalities that are found within the state itself: 11 ethnic backgrounds over 1million people (Statistics Canada 2016). This means it is likely that everyone in Canada will have at least a few inter-cultural experiences in his/her lifetime. In order to interact with each culture respectfully, it is necessary to employ the concepts of cultural fluency, something which people may do this

consciously or unconsciously. Those Canadians who are often around people from different backgrounds may already exhibit cultural fluency without realizing it, and others may need to actively learn the concepts.

Galtung's 1990 essay on cultural violence is a follow-up to his 1969 essay on structural violence. He defines cultural violence as "those aspects of culture, the symbolic sphere of our existence...that can be used to justify or legitimize direct or structural violence" (1990, 291). Cultural violence is very similar to structural violence, as they are both types of violence which are embedded in society and infringe on a person's basic human needs. Both culture and structure are difficult to define, and can manifest themselves in many different ways and contexts. They do not stay the same from place to place, making them difficult to see and pinpoint at first. This latency makes both cultural and structural violence an important part of the overall discussion of Indigenous peoples and reconciliation in Canada.

Later, Galtung lists and discusses six dimensions of cultural violence: religion, ideology, language, art, empirical science, and formal science. Galtung explains that an example of religious cultural violence is the creation of a hierarchy in Christianity for those who God chooses, putting men, whites, and upper classes above women, colored, and lower classes. Cultural violence in the realm of ideology is nationalism and the distinction between the self and the other, or the in-group and the out-group. One prime example in languages is the cultural violence that is expressed in some languages, especially Latin-based languages by rendering "women invisible by using the same word for the male gender as for the entire human species." For the dimension of art, Galtung chronicles a short history of major events and art pieces in Europe that have contributed to cultural violence, especially in their depiction of oriental despotism. Next, Galtung discusses neoclassical economics, stimulated by Adam Smith, and the cultural violence that is present when a country decides to focus on producing one thing in which it has an advantage. Lastly, in his discussion of formal science, Galtung argues that cultural violence is exhibited in mathematics by training one to think in terms of black and white and polarization. (Galtung, Cultural Violence 1990, 296-301)

### Cultural Violence in the Canadian Context

One example of cultural and structural violence that Galtung gives in his paper is of the forced slavery of Africans in the United States. He writes:

Africans are captured, forced across the Atlantic to work as slaves; millions are killed in the process - in Africa, on board, in the Americas. This massive direct violence over

centuries seeps down and sediments as massive structural violence, with whites as the master topdogs and blacks as the slave underdogs, producing and reproducing massive cultural violence with racist ideas everywhere. After some time, direct violence is forgotten, slavery is forgotten, and only two labels show up, pale enough for college textbooks: ‘discrimination’ for massive structural violence and ‘prejudice’ for massive cultural violence. Sanitation of language: itself cultural violence. (Galtung 1990, 295)

While this exact event did not occur in Canada, similar things could be said about the treatment of Indigenous peoples in Canada and the United States. The main difference being that the Indigenous people were not brought to the country by slave traders. In both cases there were many historical occurrences of direct and structural violence, which over time have been forgotten, but the structures, racist mentality and white superiority are still present in many contexts, which perpetuate structural and cultural violence today. In this example the perceived superiority of white people, prejudice, and forced assimilation (through cultural and linguistic practices) are all examples of cultural violence.

In chapter 4 of the Canadian Truth and Reconciliation Commission’s report, titled Education for reconciliation, there is a discussion early on about the omission of accurate history in schools about the issues that Indigenous peoples have faced. The commission writes, “[t]his omission has left most Canadians with the view that Aboriginal people were and are to blame for the situations in which they find themselves, as though there were no external causes” (2015, 118). In social psychology, this is called an attribution error, two types of which are relevant to this scenario. The fundamental attribution error argues that people are more likely to perceive the causes of actions as personal rather than situational (Stainton Rogers 2011, 216). Meaning in the context of Canada, people perceive the struggles of Indigenous peoples as personal (lazy, unmotivated, alcoholic) rather than situational (historical trauma, broken family, structural/cultural violence). The actor-observer error occurs when a person or a group identifies their own actions –or the actions of others from the in-group– to be caused by situational factors, and regard the actions of a person or people from the out-group to be personally motivated (Stainton Rogers 2011, 216).

One example of cultural violence in Canada is the government’s adoption but lack of enforcing/integration of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. When the United Nations adopted the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples in 2007, Canada was one of four countries against the declaration. In May 2016 Canada

officially adopted the declaration, giving hope to many Indigenous peoples in the country. Two months after the government vowed to adopt UNDRIP, the justice minister called adopting the declaration as Canadian law “unworkable” and a “political distraction” (ATPN National News 2016).

Recently, a number of pipelines have been approved by the federal government, a move that has been critiqued by many for the lack of consultation with Indigenous groups. Concerning consultation, the UNDRIP article 32.2 says this:

“States shall consult and cooperate in good faith with the Indigenous peoples concerned through their own representative institutions in order to obtain their free and informed consent prior to the approval of any project affecting their lands or territories and other resources, particularly in connection with the development, utilization or exploitation of mineral, water or other resources.” (United Nations 2007)

This article affects the pipeline project that was recently approved. Sources say that the company had letters of support from only one third of Indigenous groups that would be affected by the pipeline (Johnson 2016) (Wilt 2016). This is not in line with the consent that the UNDRIP says is necessary. Perhaps this could be categorized in Galtung’s economic dimension of cultural violence, since the government is taking advantage of the land and resources of Indigenous peoples for economic gain.

## Methodology

Considering historical roots of structural violence and trauma in Canada, my research question asks how can education be decolonized and used as a tool for reconciliation and combating structural violence in Winnipeg. To answer my research question, I compiled data from a few different sources. My research evolved into a sort of case study into reconciliation and education in Winnipeg, with a qualitative focus to the methods and analysis. My main type of primary data was collected in the form of interviews. These interviews are a mix of in-person semi-structured interviews and interviews through email correspondence. The other data sources are the Manitoba Grade 11 History curriculum documents, and the “Education for Reconciliation” chapter from the TRC’s report.

I started by contacting local educators to see if any would be interested in participating in my research project. In the end, I was able to find five educators that were willing to participate. I conducted interviews with these five people, one of which was in-person, two more were through Skype connection, and the final two were conducted through email correspondence.

The overall approach to my research was designed by evaluating what would be feasible while doing research about a phenomenon that is geographically distant from my place of residence. Therefore, it was determined that I would not rely fully on interviews, but also use publicly available documents to supplement the interviews. The other materials include the Manitoba Grade 11 Canadian History curriculum, and the report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission.

### Narrative Analysis

Narrative analysis is appropriate in this study, since the point of the research is to identify and discuss which narratives are being left out of history curricula in Canada. The questions I eventually chose to ask my interviewees were inspired from an informal narrative analysis of the current situation in Canada concerning education and Indigenous peoples. Since time and history –and people’s understandings of these phenomena– are an integral part of my study, some incorporation of narrative analysis and theory seemed appropriate. The theory of structural violence also applies to all aspects of life and society; therefore, a holistic method of analysis is important.

## Content Analysis and Grounded Theory

Klaus Krippendorff defines content analysis as “a research technique for making replicable and valid inferences from texts (or other meaningful matter) to the contexts of their use” (Krippendorff 2004, 18). The texts and “other meaningful matter” in my study refers to interviews and their transcriptions, the Truth and Reconciliation Report, and Manitoba Grade 11 History curriculum.

Krippendorff identifies six textual structures that apply to his understanding of content analysis: (1) texts have no objective, (2) texts do not have single meanings, (3) the meanings invoked by texts need not be shared, (4) meanings (contents) speak to something other than the given texts, (5) texts have meanings relative to particular contexts, discourses, or purposes, and (6) the nature of texts demands that content analysts draw specific inferences from a body of texts to their chosen context (Krippendorff 2004, 22-24). These six features demonstrate the importance of the researcher in the interpretation of the texts, as well as the importance of context in the analysis. Since meaning and context are important aspects of my research, this understanding of content analysis is applicable. Krippendorff also asserts that interviews and content analysis often go hand in hand. To make sense of the data that is gathered through the means of interviews, content analysis is used to code and find meaning in the transcripts of interviews (Krippendorff 2004, 27).

In addition to content analysis, some grounded theory is also applied to the coding and analysis methods. Coding is a process of analysing written documents and transcripts, which is used in both content analysis and grounded theory. When a researcher codes data, she/he looks for patterns, repeated ideas/topics, and connections in the data; these can then be recorded and become categories for coding the data (Packer 2011, 58). Packer states that the practices of abstraction and generalization in grounded theory work to divide and find commonalities within data, they “function together to (1) divide an interview transcript into separate units, (2) remove these units from their context, (3) identify abstract and general “categories,” (4) extract the “content” from these categories, and (5) describe this content in formal terms” (Packer 2011, 59).

The main data collected for my study is audio and transcriptions from five interviews with local Winnipeg educators. Many researchers in the field of qualitative research have argued that entire interviews are an acceptable unit for analysis, and that researchers should patiently read each of the interviews in order to comprehend the characteristics of the interview before

becoming too focused on analytics (Elo and Kyngäs 2008, 109, 113). There are different types of units in content analysis, but for my analysis I have determined that each interview is a suitable sampling unit. Each unit (interview) is then divided into six sections corresponding to the question that was asked by the researcher. However, these sections do not delineate separate coding units, but rather a way for the researcher to more easily locate and compare information found within each unit. These can be considered thematic distinctions within the sampling unit. Krippendorff notes that creating thematic units can be difficult for a researcher, but they are also attractive to both the researcher and the reader because of their correspondence to “readers’ understanding” and “the descriptive richness of thematic units” (Krippendorff 2004, 108-109). Since my thematic units were determined before the conducting of the interviews they are reliable because they correspond to the questions posed to the interviewee.

When coding, Krippendorff emphasizes the cognitive abilities that are necessary of the coder in order to effectively code and interpret the data. Once learning the rules of coding and how to interpret text as a data set, “coders must be capable of *understanding these rules and applying them consistently* throughout the analysis” (Krippendorff 2004, 127, emphasis original). Krippendorff also notes that a coder of content analysis should be familiar with the subject matter in order to effectively interpret and code the data, as an unfamiliar may misinterpret the data or not understand what is being discussed (Krippendorff 2004, 128). Since the research question and general subject of my research is centred in the geographical area of my home city in my home country, I am more than adequately familiar with the issues that my interviewees have discussed during our interviews.

According to Krippendorff’s guide to content analyses, my research is a text-driven analysis. In this type of analysis, a precise research question is not needed from the beginning; the first step is to gather text to be analysed (Krippendorff 2004, 341). My research project began from a general idea and research question, and then I proceeded to collect data in the form of interviews and other documents before having a precise research question.

## Participants

After contacting many Winnipeg educators, five finally participated through interviews or responding to questions by email. The only in-person interviewee was Steve Heinrichs, the Director of Indigenous Relations at Mennonite Church Canada. The two participants interviewed over Skype were Deanna Zantingh, the Keeper of the Learning Circle, and



Adrian Jacobs, the Keeper of the Circle, both from the Sandy-Saulteaux Spiritual Centre. The two remaining respondents, Jeffrey Ansloos, a former educator in Winnipeg, now an assistant professor at the University of Victoria, and Raymond Sokalski, a Social Studies teacher at Kelvin High School, communicated with me through email, and sent me their responses to my questions electronically.

### The Interview Questions

All participants were sent a document describing my research project, including a short background paragraph with my specific research interests. After that section, my six interview questions were listed, which read as follows:

1. Do you agree with the TRC report that education can contribute positively to reconciliation?
  - a. Yes/No/Comments
2. Does the curriculum/material in your school/organization include aspects of Indigenous history in Canada?
  - a. Does your school utilize a curriculum that provides space for the discussion of these issues?
  - b. Yes/No/Comments
3. What do you hope will emerge from the TRC recommendations (or generally in the national discourse concerning reconciliation)?
4. How do you view your role as an educator/trainer (in response to 63.iii, in light of the residential school legacy)?
  - a. Please give a few specific examples
5. In your view, what are essential aspects of a curriculum that takes the TRC calls seriously? What are some important things for Canadian students to learn about Indigenous peoples?
  - a. What is not being taught?
  - b. What is already taught?
  - c. What (specifically) in the curriculum needs to be changed?
6. In the future, what direction should we go, what should we work towards? (Concerning education)

All of the participants were asked the same questions. However, some additional clarifying questions, or other questions stemming from the conversation were asked during the in-person and Skype interviews. The interviews were recorded and then transcribed by the researcher. All interviews and responses were then scrutinized together and analysed according to the methods previously described. This analysis will be discussed in detail further on. Participants were encouraged to ask other questions if they had any, and were also free to refrain from answering any questions that they did not wish to answer.

## Coding Analysis

After the interviews were recorded and transcribed, I was able to start the coding process.

The transcripts were first separated into six units, each corresponding to one of the six original questions posed by the researcher. I proceeded to look for themes within the answers from the interviewees, as well as broader themes that were present throughout the interviews.

Five main themes were identified from the interview data: relationships, needing space for discussion/conversations, historical/intergenerational trauma, sovereignty/land, and power dynamics. Excerpts from the interviews that fit into these categories were then coded and assigned to the corresponding category.

## Comparison to High School History Curriculum

My analysis of the provincial curriculum will focus on the High School level, since the content of post-secondary courses varies between educational institutions. However, education on all levels (primary, secondary, post-secondary) are all important in the educational process as well as for reconciliation. The Grade 11 History curriculum was chosen because it specifically focuses on Canadian history rather than global history or Canada's role in broader global history. Since this course on Canadian history is mandatory for all students, it is a good place to begin and assess the minimum standard of what students in Manitoba are learning.

The Grade 11 History curriculum was read and sections concerning Indigenous issues and history were located and noted. Since residential schools are a significant part of the history of the treatment of Indigenous peoples, a search for "residential schools" was also made throughout the curriculum document. Within the curriculum's sections about Indigenous history in Canada, 12 different mentions of residential schools were found. There were also eight mentions in various "learning resources" sections, meaning they are links or references to materials related to what is encouraged to be taught in the curriculum document. However, not all of these mentions of residential schools are required teaching subjects for teachers. Many of the references and mentions of residential schools are suggestions for topics that teachers could discuss with students, meaning that it is often up to the teacher whether or not residential schools are talked about in a history classroom. Furthermore, 12 mentions within a document that consists of nearly 300 pages is not very much in the grand scope of the history curriculum. Moreover, the instances of residential schools do not mention or necessitate any discussion about the nature of residential schools, what occurred at the schools, or what the

lasting trauma and impacts are of residential schools. They are mentioned more as an example of an assimilation policy, without actually explaining how they worked at assimilating Indigenous peoples. Therefore, it seems unlikely that in an average classroom students would be learning about residential schools and the impact that they have had on many generations of Indigenous peoples in Canada.

These sections were then analysed to see if they contained any of the themes that were found in the analysis of the interviews, therefore determining whether the things that educators found important for people to learn were indeed present in mandatory teaching materials and courses. The Canadian history document was then analysed to see if it contained any of the five themes induced from the interviews with local educators, relationships, needing space for discussion/conversations, historical/intergenerational trauma, sovereignty/land, and power dynamics.

## Findings

After analysing data from various different sources, including interviews with local educators, exploring high school curricula, chapters from the Truth and Reconciliation's report, five key themes for reconciliation and decolonization have been identified as important in the realm of education. This section will discuss the presence of the themes in the interviews and their broader meaning and relevance. As well, these themes will be searched for within the Manitoba Grade 11 Canadian History curriculum, and their relevance and connection to the interviews will be discussed.

### Relationships

The most recurring message from my interviewees was the need for relationships between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples in Canada. Without relationships to build on and learn from each other, there can be no reconciliation in Canada. The relationship between Indigenous and non-Indigenous was not always oppressor-oppressed, but there was once a time of mutually beneficial relationships where the local Indigenous peoples helped new settlers to survive the unpredictably cold winter. In turn, the settlers traded goods and new ideas with their Indigenous helpers. How incredible it would be to find a way to form mutually beneficial relationships now, where Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples are able to learn from each other and help each other grow and work towards creating a peaceful and just society.

Some of my interviewees talked about the importance of relationships between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples more than others, but each one did mention it at some point. A few instances were related to the lack of relationships in education and how education can be used to promote better relationships between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples. From what I can infer from my interviewees, all would say that relationship building goes both ways, in that Indigenous people need to seek relationships with non-Indigenous peoples, and equally non-Indigenous peoples need to seek relationships with Indigenous peoples.

Relationship building goes beyond an individual level and requires collective effort.

For example, when asked about the curriculum at his workplace, Adrian said "in our analysis [of the curriculum] was that there was a weakness in terms of right relations" (Adrian, 2017). Deanna added that "education has a role in helping us to see some of the things that we've been intentionally shielded from, and that we need to see to move into better relationship"

(Deanna, 2017). So, education has a role in bringing about better relationships, when the lack of relationships has been acknowledged and rectified in a curriculum, and when students learn about issues that they have been previously shielded from it can lead to better understanding and relationships with other people.

Other instances where the topic of relationships came up was in talking about the future and what needs to be changed in Canada. My interviewees critiqued the current strategies, saying “we aren’t fundamentally changing the on the ground relationships” (Steve, 2017), and “we have to find ways to work out real relationships with Indigenous communities and Indigenous elders and teachers” (Deanna, 2017), and that there needs to be a “fundamental renegotiation of the Canadian Settler-State in a state-to-state relationship with Indigenous peoples” (Jeff, 2017).

Raymond, a high school teacher in Winnipeg, said that he hopes that what will present itself in the next few generations would be “increased awareness, among non-Indigenous citizens of the contributions of First Nations to Canada's way of life as we know it, increased integration, fewer incidents of episodic racism and less structural racism” (Raymond, 2017). This increase in understanding, change in perception, and integration can happen from a place of relationship with Indigenous peoples, as it is not easy to change perception and promote integration without also working on relationships. Raymond also added that in the high school curriculum “we need to work towards more flexibility in the timetable to facilitate authentic encounters with community leaders in the community, i.e. working together on rehabilitating a house or cleaning up a playground or serving soup in a food bank, etc.” (Raymond, 2017). These things he talked about also come from a place of relationship and encountering people outside of a classroom setting. Meeting others and relationship-building can take place both inside and outside the classroom.

A keyword search for “relationship” in the Manitoba Grade 11 curriculum on Canadian History yielded many results. Some instances of the word *relationship* were not related to Indigenous peoples and were therefore ignored in my study. The occurrences of *relationship* that were related to Indigenous peoples fell into six categories, explained in the table below (Table 1).

Table 1

Theme	Excerpt from Curriculum	Mandatory?
Relationship	1. Canada's change in relationship with Indigenous peoples after Confederation. Explained in four points: a. Change in relationship after decline of fur trade b. Fur traders "cultivated relationships based on partnership and equality" with Indigenous peoples to achieve success with fur trade c. Creation of numbered treaties during 1870s changed relationships d. Continuing challenge for Indigenous peoples to have just and equal relationship with Canada while maintaining traditional culture	Yes, an "essential question" in the curriculum
	2. Change in relationship between Indigenous and non-Indigenous from autonomous coexistence to colonialism to present stage of renegotiation and renewal	Yes, one of many "enduring understandings" in the curriculum, repeated many times
	3. Quote from Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples, about changing relationship over time and need for "fair and lasting terms of coexistence"	No, just quote box
	4. Relationship with Indigenous peoples listed as challenge for Canadian government	No, listed as one of many "alternative approaches" in a learning module
	5. Indigenous peoples sought to renegotiate relationship after White Paper proposal	No, mentioned in historical background in section on status of Québec
	6. Elaboration on point 2, changing relationship over time and what Indigenous peoples are working on to change the relationship	Yes, part of the "enduring understanding" about changing relationships, part of point 2

Table 1 shows the instances of relationship in the curriculum that are relevant to Indigenous peoples and learning about their history. The table shows the six main points and then each have been labelled as mandatory or not in the curriculum. The mandatory aspects of the curriculum do give students a general knowledge of some historical points of interest such as how the relationship between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples has changed from the time of fur trading, to the creation of treaties and how that can affect practicing their culture

now. The second point in the table summarizes one “enduring understanding” that is repeated many times throughout the curriculum. However, saying that the present stage of relationship is of “renegotiation and renewal” is a bit optimistic and perhaps an overly positive way of saying that the relationship is not good and needs to be readdressed.

Some of the other points from the Canadian history curriculum concerning relationships with Indigenous peoples are not mandatory for classroom discussion. One is purely a quote in the context of a general discussion on Indigenous peoples in Canadian history. Another is a purely optional point of discussion listed as an alternative approach. The third one is a brief mention in the context of a discussion about the status of Québec. Of course, it is possible that these optional points on relationships could be discussed with students, but when there are so many other possible options for teachers, the likelihood seems low, especially if the teacher is non-Indigenous, unfamiliar or uncomfortable with talking about Indigenous issues and relationships with students.

Additionally, point six only talks about what Indigenous peoples are doing, and how they are changing to participate in mainstream Canadian culture, not what non-Indigenous Canadians are and should be doing to right the relationship. This is different from what my interviewees talked about when they mentioned relationships. My interviewees rather talked about what the Canadian state and what non-Indigenous peoples should be working on to improve their relationship with Indigenous peoples. A change in relationship and social structures has to come from initiatives from all sides, not just one side. It is not purely the responsibility of Indigenous peoples to say what they want and how they want relationships to change. The strained relationship is not only because of difficulties in maintaining traditional cultures, but from violence that is built into the structures of Canadian society and the inequality of opportunities in life.

### Space for Critical Conversations

My interview participants greatly emphasized the need for conversations and engaging with difficult issues on a regular basis as a way to learn about other points of view and promote reconciliation. Speaking critically about issues may seem like a small step, but it can be a driving force in political movements. If people are talking about and engaging with issues, that promotes awareness, and awareness can bring about change.

When asked about how education can contribute to reconciliation, several of my interviewees emphasized how education is important for learning and talking about different issues, many

of which can be difficult. Further on, some respondents critiqued the nature of some conversations, saying that there should be more action to go with the discussions. For example, one asserted that there have been some changes happening recently on a national level, but he also argued that there are indications that “when push comes to shove, yes we'll have lots of good conversations around education, but if we want to run that dam through your territory, we will, and if we want more pipelines, we will” (Steve, 2017). It is hopeful that there are beginning to be more conversations about issues affecting Indigenous peoples, but of course there need to be consequent actions to go with the conversations. Another respondent felt encouraged by the level of discussions that are happening now, saying “things like this that are being discussed by a great number with a lot of...experts and well trained Indigenous leaders talking about these ideas across the country. I think it creates a climate where there's greater opportunity for understanding so that when concepts or ideas are brought up there's a quicker resonance with that” (Adrian, 2017). From this point of view, there needs to be a space for discussions in order to promote a familiarity and awareness around certain issues. If people, especially non-Indigenous peoples, are not aware or familiar with the issues affecting Indigenous peoples, then the climate will not be ready for rectifying the structural violence that is present in Canada.

In Manitoba, one university has mandated that students must take one Indigenous studies course to graduate, and other universities are discussing adopting this policy as well. While this can be a way to start engaging students at a university level on Indigenous issues, one course is not a lot in the scope of a degree (Steve, 2017). As well, engaging students at a university level does not reach all students, as many people do not choose to continue their education after high school. Even if someone chooses to take a few courses at the university level, they may not graduate, and thus would not need to complete an Indigenous course. Teaching and engaging students in critical conversations about difficult issues is both important and relevant from an early age. One of my respondents told me that he “would love that especially in those most formative years, for that to be more of a conversation, like, to actually raise so it's kind of like a critical questions in the classroom, about what we're being asked frankly” (Steve, 2017).

Discussing and raising questions about topics relating to Indigenous peoples could be more present outside of the classroom setting. A classroom environment is just a way to begin a discussion that should spread to more areas of life. One respondent maintained that it is indeed important to “have these conversations in our homes and in areas of study to talk



about what could or should shift or what is fine” (Deanna, 2017). Another emphasized that “for the TRC Calls to Action to work, Canadians need to do some deeper learning about themselves...they need to wrestle with what it means to live in occupied territory, to benefit from the privilege afforded by Indigenous dispossession, to interrogate both neo-conservatism and neo-liberalism and study how these two movements reify the same status quo” (Jeff, 2017). So, discussions about issues affecting Indigenous peoples should be talked about in locations other than classrooms, in all environments and situations. The classroom is a good place for these discussions to begin, but in order to promote real reconciliation the discussion needs to spread outside of the classroom to daily life and general political discourse.

When asked about gaps in the curriculum, one respondent said that an issue with focusing too much on learning history is that “steeping ourselves in history sometimes leaves little time to discuss and debate contemporary issues like leadership in First Nations, contemporary health and employment challenges, dysfunction and addiction challenges resulting from past trauma...” (Raymond, 2017). Of course, learning history is important for gaining background knowledge about the issues, but Raymond also makes a good point that there should be space for discussing how history affects contemporary issues, and making connections between history and the present. In this context, and in response to what should be altered in the curriculum, Raymond adds that for him, “the challenge lies more in providing the time and resources for teachers and students to COVER the curriculum in a meaningful way” (Raymond, 2017). There needs to be both space and opportunities for discussion about contemporary issues as well as time and resources to assist teachers and students in these discussions.

Since a classroom setting is an important place for critical discussions to begin, it follows that my analysis of the topic continues to the curriculum document. Following each main topic, or “essential question” in the curriculum, there is a section on the historical background of the question and then a section of historical content with a list of topics relating to the main question. Teachers are encouraged to “Select topics from the following list of suggested historical content to guide student inquiry.” There are often many potential topics for inquiry listed in these sections, giving teachers a bit of flexibility and choice of what to focus on in a given broader topic. Since these sections seem to be the most apparent in encouraging student discussions, conversations and individual inquiry, I decided to explore these lists of historical content to see how many included topics relating to Indigenous peoples.

Out of nineteen “essential questions” from the curriculum, thirteen have historical content sections with topics relating to Indigenous peoples. The frequency of topic points relating to Indigenous peoples varies from question to question, from one topic, to several, to most of the topics.

The introductory section of the curriculum also encourages teachers to have conversations with students about potentially controversial topics and to help students to feel safe in these discussions. These parts of the curriculum are presented in Table 2 (below).

*Table 2*

Encouraging conversations	Quote	Page
1.	Unless students feel safe—emotionally and physically—they will not reveal their true selves or their real thoughts and feelings, and discussions will be artificial and dishonest. Teachers need to design learning experiences that help students learn to trust and care for each other.	I-16
2.	Education should assist students in developing empathy and self-esteem, as well as a strong sense of personal identity through the positive portrayals of their own personal and group characteristics, cultural and historical heritage, and life experiences. Education should also assist students in developing an understanding of, and respect for, the personal and group characteristics and cultural and historical heritage of others. By infusing the diversity that is reflected in students and their communities in the curriculum and into the whole life of the school, students, their parents, teachers, and their communities learn about themselves and each other. They begin to see the similarities and differences that make each person and cultural group unique. Whether through school celebrations, such as First Nations celebratory circle dances and graduations, or through community-based inquiry projects that focus on local and global issues and needs, students should be given opportunities to explore the characteristics, histories, experiences, and values of various peoples. This knowledge will assist students in building empathy for others, as well as a sense of community, interdependence, and belonging. It will also challenge incidents of stereotyping, prejudice, discrimination, and racism that students may experience.	I-18, section on Education for Inclusion
3.	Teachers should not avoid controversial issues. Diversity of perspectives, beliefs and values, disagreement, and dissension are all part of living in a democratic and diverse society. Furthermore, discussion and debate concerning ethical or existential questions serve to motivate students and make learning more meaningful.	I-21, section on Dealing with Controversial Issues

Even though teachers are encouraged to discuss controversial issues with students and not shy away from difficult conversations, it does not mean that all teachers are prepared for these kinds of discussions. If a teacher is unprepared, unwilling or uncomfortable with a certain topic, then it will not be talked about in a classroom. Therefore, what a student learns varies from school to school, depending on what kind of resources a school has and what kind of teachers are at the school. One interviewee expressed concern to me that “educators are not adequately prepared to discuss these issues creating an unfair burden on Indigenous people to educate white settlers in racialized and colonial violence” (Jeff, 2017).

It is positive that such a high amount of historical content sections from the curriculum contain discussion topics relating to Indigenous peoples (13/19). This means that it is possible for students to learn about Indigenous issues in relation to many different historical events and themes. It is also positive to note that teachers are indeed encouraged to have discussions about controversial issues while ensuring students feel safe during these discussions (Table 2).

### Intergenerational Trauma

Trauma is another theme that came up quite a lot in my interviews. These mentions of trauma were mostly either referencing traumatic events in history, or the idea of intergenerational trauma; that trauma can be passed down through generations. When my interviewees discussed residential schools, how the impact of residential schools has affected people intergenerationally, or other instances of historical violence and structural violence, these were coded into the category of intergenerational trauma.

Learning about historical instances of violence and trauma are important, so that we can understand how people are affected by this violence today. Trauma does not go away after the people who have directly experienced it pass away; consciously or unconsciously, trauma is passed down from survivors to their children or other people in their community. Therefore, it is imperative for Canadians to learn about the trauma that Indigenous peoples have experienced in the past as well as the present trauma and structural violence. Consequently, it would make sense for students to learn about the events from history that have a lasting impact as a result of the trauma that has been passed down through generations. If students learn about these events in history class, then perhaps there would be a greater awareness and respect given to Indigenous peoples.

When asked about what he would hope would emerge from the TRC recommendations and generally in reconciliation discourse, one interviewee responded that in these discussions he

would like to see “the idea of trauma and how it effects people long term and intergenerationally” talked about more (Adrian, 2017).

When talking about future needs for education and reconciliation, the idea of historical trauma also came up. One participant emphasized the idea of intergenerational and systemic problems, adding that “colonization however has impacted that, so all the violence and trauma that comes from dislocating people, removing control from their communities to some colonial centre and the abuse of residential schools, etc. All of those things are contributing factors that lead to the kinds of addictions and the need for interventions in families that are needed now” (Adrian, 2017). Another participant pointed out that historically “Canada just shoved Indigenous people into remote reserve communities that now the majority of the Canadian population is still fearful to enter, broken only by, uh, historically and Indian agent” (Deanna, 2017). Both of these participants make reference to the relocation of Indigenous peoples onto reserves instead of their traditional lands and the effects that this has had on people. Obviously, the physical dislocation of people and limiting their cultural practices has had a huge effect through the generations, and many Indigenous peoples are very removed from their traditional culture as a result. Other events from colonization in general have had a huge traumatic effect, such as residential schools. As the quote from Adrian says, these are all examples of factors that have had a role in breaking up families and fuelling addictions and substance abuse problems. Since historical problems are manifesting themselves in current problems, these events are extremely important for students to learn about.

One interviewee, an educator of human service workers who will work in Indigenous communities, asserts that in his work it is essential for his students to “have a deep understanding of the histories of colonialism and how they intersect with Indigenous children and families” (Jeff, 2017). Jeff’s statement concerning the education of his students demonstrates that it is indeed important to learn about events of the past because they have a lasting effect on people and communities that is still evident today.

For Raymond, the generational/historical trauma is one of the things that is not being taught. It is one of the themes he mentioned when asked what is missing from the curriculum, and something that could be talked about in discussions about contemporary issues that affect Indigenous peoples. He writes, “generally, I think that steeping ourselves in history sometimes leaves little time to discuss and debate contemporary issues like leadership in First Nations, contemporary health and employment challenges, dysfunction and addiction

challenges resulting from past trauma...” (Raymond, 2017). He acknowledges that these things are missing from classrooms, and that past trauma is an example of a contemporary issue that could be discussed alongside history.

My subsequent search for themes of historical and intergenerational trauma in the Grade 11 History curriculum did not yield very promising results. The word “trauma” is not present at all in the entire curriculum document. Additionally, only one mention of “generation” or “intergenerational” applies to Indigenous peoples:

First Peoples also developed or had knowledge of mathematics, astronomy, calendar systems, writing, engineering, architecture, city planning, textiles, metallurgy, painting, sculpture, ceramics, medicines and medical procedures, and intergenerational preservation of knowledge (p. III-11, historical background of EQ 11.1.1 Who were the First Peoples, and how did they structure their world?)

This quote makes reference to an “intergenerational preservation of knowledge” that was present before colonization and European influence in North America. In a way, this quote from the curriculum does demonstrate that ideas can be passed down intergenerationally, and if ideas can be, then why not trauma? But this inference is perhaps a stretch, and it would be more easily argued that the idea of intergenerational passing of trauma is not introduced anywhere in the curriculum. However, residential schools did disrupt intergenerational preservation of knowledge.

Since residential schools are a big part of intergenerational trauma I searched the curriculum to see if any sections that discussed residential schools also discussed intergenerational trauma or even how the impact of residential schools could affect families or communities. However, there were no mentions of family or community in relation to residential school trauma. When discussing residential schools, the curriculum mostly calls them an assimilation policy and does not even allude to the idea that residential schools could have intergenerational effects or trauma.

Therefore, it is possible to infer that even if students are learning about residential schools, colonization, and other historical events that could bring trauma to Indigenous peoples, the students are likely not learning how this history can affect people now. Of course, it is possible that some teachers may discuss this in the classroom with students, but it is not at all

prescribed in the curriculum. Consequently, learning about historical and intergenerational trauma is one way in which the curriculum could be improved.

In order to really decolonize through education, trauma and how it affects people in a generational way must be discussed both inside and outside of classrooms. This lasting trauma is one of the ways that structural violence is built into Canadian society; for if trauma is not dealt with and continues to hinder Indigenous peoples in attaining basic needs, comforts in life, or long-term employment, then this trauma needs to be talked about and addressed. There is a gap in the curriculum concerning this topic, one that could help to promote decolonization and rectify structural violence if addressed.

### Sovereignty and Land

When land was taken away from Indigenous peoples through treaties or other means, part of their means to carry out traditional practices was taken away. Land has continually been an integral part of Indigenous culture, therefore when land use was limited, part of Indigenous culture was threatened. Land and sovereignty came up in most of my interviews, making it another important topic for further discussion and analysis. Since it is my understanding that land and sovereignty are intrinsically connected in the discussion of Indigenous rights, they will be analysed together in this section. This is partially because treaties were (and still are) a way for the federal government to act out their power over Indigenous peoples, taking away Indigenous sovereignty. As well, treaties took away Indigenous land title, and relocated Indigenous peoples away from their traditional lands. Consequently, the discussion of sovereignty, land, and treaties can be made together.

When I asked my interviewees what they hoped would emerge following the TRC recommendations and in the general discourse of reconciliation, many mentioned land as something they hoped would be talked about more. Adrian (2017) told me he would like to see “the whole idea of sharing the land and what it meant to Indigenous people” be talked about more.

In talking about what’s missing from curriculum or what needs to be changed, one respondent said that “it’s understanding of land as something other than a commodity” (Deanna, 2017). We so often talk about ownership of land, or about using land as a means to farm or raise animals. It is rarely talked about as a thing in itself, as something other than a commodity, as my interviewee pointed out. Since land is important to Indigenous peoples,

framing land in this way is also important for understanding and respecting Indigenous peoples and their culture.

In response to the same question, another interviewee responded that the curriculum “must fundamentally question the legitimacy of Canadian sovereignty in the current status of violated treaties” and that it is important for Canadians to learn about “the strengths of Indigenous peoples, their stories of this land and their relationship to it” (Jeff, 2017). Since Indigenous peoples have such a different relationship and connection to land than most Canadians, it should be part of the curriculum for students to learn about this difference, and learn about how land has been a tool of colonization. In order to work towards decolonization in education, students should learn about the land as something to be honoured and stewarded, not purely a resource commodity.

Another participant in my research did not mention sovereignty and land specifically as an issue in the curriculum, but mentioned treaties many times when discussing his teaching practices. Treaties of course, relate to land ownership, and learning about the treaties is an important part of a general understanding of the Indigenous relationship to the land. This teacher told me that in his class, “students spend a week re-enacting and renegotiating Treaty Number 5 signed at Norway House, Manitoba in 1875 as an exercise in understanding the power politics at play during the colonization of Western Canada and the policies of Divide and Conquer” (Raymond, 2017). It is positive to hear that students are learning about this in at least one school in the city, and hopefully this acting out and role-playing triggers further curiosity of students into learning more about Indigenous land rights and the importance of land in Indigenous culture.

Table 3

Theme	Excerpt from Curriculum (emphasis added)	Mandatory?
Land (rights)	1. “(Note: In contrast to Western beliefs, First Peoples believed that living things included objects such as rocks and the <b>land</b> itself.)” p. III-11	No, bracket in historical background of EQ 11.1.1
	2. “Worldviews and societies of First Peoples: relationships to <b>land</b> ” (p. III-12)	No, one of many suggested topics for potential discussion with students
	3. “Whatever their reasons, the European explorers and settlers assumed the principle of terra nullius (Latin for “ <b>nobody’s land</b> ”). They believed that First Peoples did not own the <b>land</b> on which they	Yes, historical background of EQ 11.1.2

	lived, and therefore Europeans had the right to claim possession of it.” (p. III-17)	
	4. “The Métis Nation: Way of life, buffalo hunt, <b><u>lands</u></b> , language, religion, role of women” (p. III-44)	No, from list of potential discussion topics in Historical Content of EQ 11.2.2
	5. “Colonization of First Nations in the West occurred as the treaties that had been negotiated with Canada were largely ignored. The treaty promises were replaced by a policy of assimilation, implemented through various means such as the <i>Indian Act</i> of 1876 and the creation of Indian residential schools. These measures resulted in the <b><u>loss of traditional lands</u></b> , widespread poverty, and the social and political marginalization that continues to characterize many First Nations communities today.... The Manitoba Act of 1870, which brought Manitoba into Confederation as a province, was a result of the Métis resistance. The Act ensured language, religious, and <b><u>land rights</u></b> for the “old settlers,” including the Métis who lived in Manitoba prior to 1870.” (p. III-59)	Yes, historical background of EQ 11.3.1
	6. “Red River Resistance and Manitoba’s entry into Confederation (1869–70): Scrip and Métis <b><u>land loss</u></b> ” (p. III-60)	No, from list of potential discussion topics, also from EQ 11.3.1
	7. “Canadian expansion sea to sea: Canada’s vision for nation-building: CPR, settlement, agricultural and industrial development, <b><u>dispossession of First Nations lands</u></b> , and displacement of Métis” (p. III-66)	No, from list of potential discussion topics in EQ 11.3.2
	8. “The Dominion of Canada was anxious to open up the West to Canadian and European settlement, and negotiated the numbered treaties with First Nations. Although these treaties recognized certain rights, they extinguished Aboriginal title to First Nations <b><u>lands</u></b> and relegated First Nations to reserves.” (p. III-73)	Yes, historical background of EQ 11.3.3
	9. “From allies to subordinates: Transition from Peace and Friendship treaties to extinguishment of Aboriginal title to the <b><u>land</u></b> ” (p. III-74)	No, potential discussion topic from EQ 11.3.3
	10. “Challenges to federalism: First Nations political activism: Change to Indian Act, allowing <b><u>land claims</u></b> (1951), <b><u>land claims disputes</u></b> ” (p. III-108)	No, from list of potential discussion topics from EQ 11.4.4
	11. “Examples of progress towards the realization of Aboriginal rights in Canada include...the creation of Nunavut... <b><u>land claims</u></b> agreements... Today, First Nations, Métis, and Inuit are active on many fronts, including working towards settlement of <b><u>land claims</u></b> ...gaining recognition of treaty rights, attaining self-government, creating nation-to-nation	Yes, historical background of EQ 11.5.3



	relationships with the rest of Canada” (p. III-129)	
	12. Protest and Political Action: Nisga’a <b><u>Land Claim</u></b> Agreement (2000) Current realities of First Nations, Métis, and Inuit in Canada: <b><u>land claims</u></b> (p. III-130)	No, from list of potential discussion topics in EQ 11.5.3
Sovereignty	There are mentions of Canadian sovereignty, Quebecois sovereignty, arctic sovereignty. No mention of Indigenous sovereignty.	No
Indigenous governance	A few mentions of Indigenous self-government, but mostly referencing their historical system of governance	

Table 3 shows the different instances in which “land” is mentioned in conjunction with Indigenous peoples in the curriculum. There are twelve sections from the curriculum in which these parameters apply. Many of the mentions of land refer to removal of lands through treaties, and the many subsequent land claims cases that have been going on in recent history. Since land was taken away from Indigenous groups through treaties or other means, there have now been many cases of these groups trying to claim back their traditional lands. This is both an issue of traditional connection to the land as well as exerting Indigenous sovereignty over the lands that were taken away.

Excerpts 1 and 2 from Table 3 mention the worldview and beliefs of Indigenous peoples in relation to land; suggesting that Indigenous peoples have a different relationship to land than non-Indigenous peoples. However, these two mentions of land and beliefs are not a necessary aspect of the curriculum. Students do not have to learn how a non-Indigenous perspective of land may differ from a (traditional) Indigenous perspective or understanding.

The other mentions of land in Table 3 consist largely of references to land claims, as well as a few instances of land loss and dispossession. However, only four of these ten mentions to land are mandatory teaching points in the curriculum. One of the four (excerpt 3, Table 3) does suggest that a European understanding of land may have differed from an Indigenous understanding, when stating that Europeans believed that Indigenous peoples did not own the land they were using. This suggests that the idea of ownership and what actions are necessary to indicate ownership were different for these two cultures. Therefore, when it comes to land, students are likely to learn that land was taken away from Indigenous peoples and that legal claims are now being made in order for many Indigenous groups and individuals to repossess the land that was taken away from them.

The mentions of sovereignty in the curriculum did not make reference to Indigenous sovereignty. The only mentions with the word “sovereignty” were Canadian sovereignty, Quebecois sovereignty, and arctic sovereignty. In a way, Indigenous sovereignty is not too different from Quebecois sovereignty, in that both are distinct cultural groups that differ largely from the rest of Canada. However, Quebecois people are all united in one geographical area, making them more unified and facilitating a discussion and struggle for their own sovereignty compared to Indigenous peoples seeking their own sovereignty from all over Canada. In addition, Québec and the Quebecois people are entitled to their own provincial government, giving them some independence and leeway to be different from other Canadian provinces. Since there is no province or one geographical area that unites Indigenous peoples, self-governance and sovereignty are difficult. One step forward in the struggle for Indigenous rights and sovereignty was the creation of Nunavut (point 11, Table 3). However, Nunavut is a territory rather than a province, giving it less freedom to self-governance than is allotted to provinces.

Though there are no mentions of Indigenous sovereignty in the curriculum, there are a few times in which Indigenous self-government is mentioned. These mentions are very few, and only make the point that Indigenous peoples used to govern themselves in the past, and that they had a different system of governance from the type we use now in Canada. There are no mentions of how Indigenous governance has changed over time, how the band system was forcefully imposed on them, or how there is a resurgence in the desire for self-governance.

There is a lack of discussion about land in the curriculum that reflects what my interviewees have recommended. For my interviewees, a discussion about land claims was not important, since land claims largely reflect an ownership standpoint rather than a cultural practice. A way in which a discussion about land can be decolonized in the realm of education is through educating students about Indigenous traditions around land, and that land is much more than a commodity or something to be possessed.

However, learning about treaties, land rights, and land claims can also promote decolonization if current students learn about these issues, then as the lawyers and policy-makers of the future, they learn to be more understanding and sympathetic towards these issues. Overturning these kinds of violent structures that are built into society will take a long time, but there is hope if more and more people are aware of the obstacles that Indigenous peoples face.

## Power Dynamics (and Decolonization)

My interviewees also spoke about decolonization and the unequal power structures (structural violence) that are present in Canadian society. This is something that is not talked about enough in Canada, hence choosing a topic related to this theme to research. I was also doubtful but curious to see if any of this language would be present in the curriculum.

As discussed earlier in this thesis, power dynamics and the imbalance of power are hugely connected to decolonization, therefore making identifying and rectifying these imbalances an important step in reconciliation. Accordingly, power and (de)colonization are some things that could also be addressed through education and spreading awareness about these issues. According to one of my respondents, “it's not always, um, cultural differences that are at play in the contest between Indigenous and settler peoples. I think what it comes down to is often just some power dynamics and, and [sic] the capacity to act on them” (Steve, 2017). Non-Indigenous peoples have many advantages and power over Indigenous peoples which are embedded in society and are sometimes unconsciously acted upon.

Since unequal power structures are familiar and hurtful to Indigenous peoples, it is also important to be aware of where and how one's advantages or disadvantages play out. One of my interviewees who works at a school said that she does “with students who are residential school survivors, and so in that sense I take that role very seriously to make sure that this process isn't something that is inflicting similar types of harm or power on these students” (Deanna, 2017). Power is often something invisible, but can be deeply traumatizing and have a lasting effect on people, therefore it is good to be aware of one's own power and the power of others. Another respondent said that some of the things that are currently missing from the curriculum are “histories of sterilization racialized incarceration, racialized childwelfare [sic], colonial structures that maintain dispossession and poverty” (Jeff, 2017).

One respondent noted how power comes up in his teaching, and that is through having his students act out the signing of a treaty between Indigenous peoples and colonizers. He said his students spend one week doing a re-enactment of a treaty in Northern Manitoba, and that it becomes “an exercise in understanding the power politics at play during the colonization of Western Canada and the policies of Divide and Conquer” (Raymond, 2017). His students begin to understand some of the power dynamics that were present around the time of Canadian Confederation and the signing of various treaties, and hopefully this learning about power helps students to understand how power is also affecting Indigenous peoples now.

In other instances, my interview participants talked about the importance of learning about colonialism, Indigenous-Settler relationships, and decolonization. These are all important facets of the theme of power, and have an effect on how power is used in Canada.

A search of the Grade 11 History curriculum for the themes of power and (de)colonization did not produce as many results as other coded themes previously discussed in this thesis, but nonetheless, a few mentions of these themes were found in the curriculum (see Table 4). The mentions of “power” in the table are only those relating to Indigenous people; I have excluded mentions governmental power, descriptions of provincial versus federal power, and power in Québec. Although these instances could be argued to apply to Indigenous issues, they are not as relevant for my research. In the theme of colonialism/colonization, there were many mentions in the curriculum that I did not include in the table as they were mostly stating that colonization did indeed occur, and stating who were the colonial powers. Since these uses of the word colonialism/colonization were not relating to power or discussing how power in colonization affected the dynamics of life for Indigenous peoples, these were left out of the table.

Table 4

Theme	Excerpt from Curriculum (emphasis added)	Mandatory?
Power	1. Considering diversity in Manitoba, “We need to take on the hard stuff of exploring why some differences translate into wealth and <b>power</b> , while others become the basis for discrimination and injustice (p. I-14)	No, in “Values diversity, equity-focused, and antibias in nature” section in Introduction, for teachers
	2. The social studies curriculum should help equip students to engage in dialogue and to challenge the world. Students need to develop skills and insights that allow them to pose essential questions: Who holds <b>power</b> and makes decisions in society? (p. I-15)	No, in “Critical” section in Introduction, for teachers
Colonization	3. Therefore, it is important that the historical development and movement towards democratic and equitable societies be acknowledged in our curricula and in our schools. Equally important is the understanding, significance, and enduring legacy of the colonization of Manitoba and Canada, and an understanding of the deep and lasting impact of colonization on Indigenous peoples and the resulting inequities that live on today. (p. I-17-18)	No, in “Education for Equity” section in Introduction, for teachers

	4. The relationship between First Nations, Métis, and Inuit peoples and non-Aboriginal peoples moved from <i>autonomous coexistence</i> to <i>colonialism</i> to the present stage of <i>renegotiation</i> and <i>renewal</i> . (p. II-4, p. III-16, p. III-22, p. III-24, p. III-28, p. III-34, p. III-40, p. III-42, p. III-46, p. III-58, p. III-62, p. III-72, p. III-76, p. III-128, p. III-132)	Yes, in enduring understandings section, also mentioned previously in Relationships section
	5. As a result of new settlement and colonial policies, First Nations in post-Confederation Canada became increasingly marginalized and were no longer treated as equals and allies, but as inferiors, dependents, and impediments to civilization. (p. III-73)	Yes, EQ 11.3.3, Historical Background
	6. From allies to subordinates: Colonialism and eurocentrism: Gradual Civilization Act (1857) (p. III-74)	No, list of potential discussion topics in EQ 11.3.3

Table 4 shows that there are no mandatory mentions of how power dynamics affect Indigenous peoples, and that only two of the four mentions of colonization are mandatory teaching points for students to learn. While of course it is a positive thing that students learn about the impacts of colonization, leaving out the ensuing disparity of power that results from colonization is a huge let down from a decolonization standpoint. However, there is some hope in point 5 from Table 4, in that it mentions the increased marginalization that Indigenous peoples faced after the Confederation of Canada, and that they were treated poorly and disregarded in decision-making realms.

Since some mentions of power and colonization are in the introduction section for teachers, perhaps some kind of trickle-down effect is possible; if teachers are aware and understand these issues perhaps it is possible that is also gets passed on to students, whether directly or indirectly.

### Truth and Reconciliation Commission Report

With my five themes from my interviews along with my analysis of the Grade 11 History curriculum in mind, I read once more the TRC report's "Education for Reconciliation" section. While some of the themes that came from my interviews are not found specifically in this section of the report, there is still some connection that can be made between my interviews, the curriculum, and the report. All of these sources are on the common thread of education, but with different purposes and standpoints. The TRC report is meant to discuss

reconciliation and education reform on a national level, in contrast to my interviews and curriculum analysis which focus on reconciliation and education on a more local, provincial level. However, since government policy and the TRC recommendations come from a national organization, but education and education reform is the responsibility of individual provinces, these documents and data must be used together and reconciled with each other in order to fully capture both a broad and local perspective on reconciliation and decolonization in Canada. Local initiatives are important so that education reform can happen across the country, but people should also be aware on a national level, since there are Indigenous peoples all over Canada that are affected by current structures of violence. The TRC recommendations of course still apply provincially, but in the hands of local educators in conjunction with local curricula. My hope of this analysis of the TRC's chapter "Education for Reconciliation" was to find parts that intersect with what my interviewees have said on the topic, in an effort to bring together local and national recommendations for future reconciliation in the country.

The structure of the "Education for Reconciliation" chapter of the TRC report is organized into thematic section with quotes from people interviewed in various places and events during the commission's tenure. These quotes are used as support for the discussion of various issues, and these sections all lead to the presentation of calls to action that summarize the needs that are presented in each section.

The topics covered in the "Education for Reconciliation" chapter are understanding history and the portrayal of Indigenous peoples in history books, creating respectful learning environments, researching reconciliation, engaging youth in dialogue, the role of national museums, the keeping and access to state records, residential school cemeteries, and establishing the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation. The first section of the "Education for Reconciliation" chapter discusses how most Canadians are taught very little about residential schools and nothing about how issues of poverty and dysfunction have developed in Indigenous communities; this has allowed most Canadians to blame Indigenous peoples themselves for the social problems that they face today. The commission also points out that the portrayal of Indigenous peoples in history books has been negative and inaccurate.

The report timelines the depiction of Indigenous peoples in history books, stating that it has evolved from portraying Indigenous peoples as "savage warriors or onlookers" in pre-1970, to emphasizing "social dysfunction...without any historical context" in the 1980s, to

“protestors advocating for rights” in the 1990s (Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada 2015, 118). While things have changed for the better in terms of Indigenous depiction in history books, the TRC still asserts that there is much that needs to be changed.

The TRC report is heavily influenced by residential school survivors, since they were the main reason for starting the commission in the first place. In addition to curricula changes, the commission writes,

Survivors have also said that knowing about these things is not enough. Our public education system also needs to influence behaviour by undertaking to teach our children—Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal—how to speak respectfully to, and about, each other in the future. Reconciliation is all about respect. (Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada 2015, 119)

This idea that pure teaching and learning about things is not enough for reconciliation reflects the themes of relationships and space for discussions that was present in my interviews. Relationships and discussions about issues can build respect, and mutual respect provides a safe space for discussions among diverse peoples. The report continues to discuss in greater length the importance of creating respectful learning environments.

The report also talks about how to engage youth, and the importance of educating young people about Indigenous issues. This further emphasizes the need for education reform at the secondary level and earlier. Learning about Indigenous issues and history cannot be left until the post-secondary level. Beyond just learning about history, the commission also asserts that youth need to be involved in reconciliation processes, a policy which is internationally agreed-upon (Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada 2015, 127). Youth represent the future of the country; therefore, they are an integral part of the reconciliation process if it wants to be sustainable. It is also important to note that a couple of the key places mentioned in the report, the Canadian Museum for Human Rights, and the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation are both located in Winnipeg. This further emphasizes the need for Winnipeg to be a forerunner in the struggle for reconciliation in Canada, because of these centres of learning as well as the demographics and racist reputation which I have discussed previously.

Some of these themes discussed in this chapter of the TRC report relate to the themes brought up by my interviewees and that have been discussed in comparison to the provincial Grade 11 History curriculum. As the name of the commission might suggest, truth and reconciliation

are the key themes discussed throughout the report, both of which are at least underlying themes in my interviews with local educators. Reconciliation is about rectifying relationships, a very prominent theme from my interviews, and finding truth and access to records/information is an integral part of making space for discussions. Reconciliation can only happen through relationships, as there is no reconciliation that is possible if conflicting parties remain separated and individualistic. Discussions about issues pertaining to Indigenous rights are only useful if there is true and accurate information present for those in discussion, and the truth of history needs to be presented and discussed with students in order for them to learn and acquire a deep understanding of the trauma, injustice, and structural violence that Indigenous peoples face unto this day.

## Discussion

Other researchers have argued that the disparity between Indigenous and non-Indigenous graduation rates are caused by structural oppressors, and I would agree with them. However, I would take this research one step further to ask, how can this be rectified through education, and what would need to be done for Canadians to learn about these structural oppressors impeding education and the postcolonial structural violence that is present in many facets of Canadian society.

Through a number of interviews with different Winnipeg educators, I have identified five thematic areas of improvement in the education of Canadians about Indigenous issues. These themes are: (1) relationships, (2) space for critical conversations, (3) intergenerational trauma, (4) sovereignty and land, and (5) power dynamics. While these themes are already present in the Grade 11 History curriculum –except for intergenerational trauma –there is room for improving all of these if we want to really work towards reconciliation and decolonization. Other scholars have identified gaps in the curricula of other provinces, but less has been done in Manitoba.

Peace researchers have already written extensively about the importance of learning another's history in peacebuilding, as well as the need to look back at history in order to understand present conflicts. Decolonization theorists have also written about empowering the Indigenous, the colonized, and the marginalized as a way to work against the structures put in place by colonial powers.

Of the five major themes I found from coding my interviews, relationships and space for discussions were more present in the curriculum than trauma, land and sovereignty, and



power dynamics. Since trauma and power dynamics have such a direct connection to colonization and structural violence, I would argue that those two need to be improved more than the others from a curriculum standpoint.

There were no mentions of trauma at all in the curriculum, which I found a bit troubling since intergenerational trauma from residential schools and other acts of colonialism are still present today, and often manifest themselves in substance abuse, addictions, and family troubles. These put a huge strain on Indigenous peoples and their communities, and make family life and long-term employment difficult to maintain.

Power dynamics and disparity were also not really discussed in the curriculum, which is an impediment to the further discussion of decolonization. Power balance and equity are integral aspects of decolonization theory, as they are heavily emphasized for marginalized peoples to struggle for more equitable power structures and relationships within a postcolonial society. Power is also an important concept in structural violence theory, therefore making it important to discuss power and Indigenous peoples' lack of power in the curriculum and the classroom, as well as in general political discourse in Canada.

I have found that the TRC report discusses some themes which are different from those identified in my coding of my interview responses, although some general themes overlap. This could be explained by the difference that the TRC operates on a national rather than local level, or because the TRC interviewed thousands of survivors whereas I interviewed five educators. Both the TRC and the educators I interviewed agreed that there needs to be education reform as a step towards reconciliation in Canada. Chapter 4 of the TRC report also emphasizes the importance of creating respectful learning environments, which has some overlap in the theme of creating space for critical conversations. Learning environments needs to be respectful in order for teachers and students to feel comfortable discussing difficult issues.

The TRC report also discusses the importance of engaging youth in the reconciliation process, which can tie into the themes of space for critical conversations as well as intergenerational trauma. It is important for youth to have critical conversations, as well as acknowledge how youth are affected intergenerationally by the trauma experienced by previous generations in their families or communities.

## Conclusion

Throughout this thesis, I have presented the relevant historical background as well as an extensive amount of previous research and literature that relates to my topic. Since education has historically been used as a tool for assimilation in Canada, I thought it relevant to discuss education along with reconciliation in an attempt to search for positive educational movements and structures to promote reconciliation between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples in Canada. Since Winnipeg has the highest percentage of Indigenous inhabitants of any major Canadian city, it becomes an important geographical location for research about reconciliation. My research more specifically asks how education can be decolonized and used as a tool for reconciliation and combating structural violence in Winnipeg.

From the research that I have presented in this thesis, it is possible to draw some conclusions on how education can be used as a tool for reconciliation and decolonization in Canada. There are a number of gaps in the curriculum in regard to the themes that my interviewees have found to be important. Through the promotion and discussion of relationships, providing space for discussions, acknowledging intergenerational trauma, discussing sovereignty, and acknowledging disparity in power dynamics in the curriculum as well as in the general political discourse, educators and other Canadians alike can work towards equity, decolonization and reconciliation in Canadian society.

Through interviews with local educators and a careful analysis of the Grade 11 History curriculum, I have shown that there are significant gaps in what is being taught and what educators concerned with Indigenous issues think should be taught. Postcolonial structural violence is indeed present in Canadian society, and especially present in Winnipeg whose population has the highest percentage of Indigenous peoples of any major Canadian city. One of the most imperative aspects of this research that needs to be emphasized is that my findings apply to all Canadians, not purely those who interact in Indigenous peoples on a regular basis. Understanding the history of different people is important for all people in promoting respect and understanding across Canada.

My review of the literature as well as the analysis of interviews, high school curriculum, and the TRC report has shown that indeed there is much to be done to reconcile and decolonize the relationship between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples in Canada. As well, education can be a useful tool in this struggle.

My interview respondents talked about relationships as being something important to incorporate in education that promotes reconciliation, in a classroom as well as outside. Relationship is something that Walker also discussed in her paper on decolonizing conflict resolution, but her ideas can also be applied here. Her critique is that a western approach to conflict resolution focuses on making agreements rather than restoring relationships, which is a more Indigenous approach (Walker 2004, 528). With this in mind, decolonizing education would be to promote more relationship building in the field of education, as well as teaching children and youth about good relationships.

Another connection to the literature that I presented earlier is with intergenerational trauma and Sawatsky's emphasis on deeper understandings of history. Sawatsky puts great importance on understanding history in peacebuilding and the need for that connection to history to go back beyond current paradigms of memory, for it to go back many generations, to the teachings of ancestors. This promotes an intergenerational understanding of history and trauma, which my interviewees have also pointed to as an important part of reconciliation in Canada.

While the themes for reconciliation in education identified from the coding of my interviews may overlap to an extent with previous literature by peace and reconciliation theorists, the themes from my interviews still hold clout since they are presented from a local Winnipeg standpoint. As well, they represent specific suggestions for how to rectify structural violence and promote the decolonization of education from a local perspective.

In my search to find a response to my research question, *how can education be decolonized and used as a tool for reconciliation and combating structural violence in Winnipeg?*, I have found that themes inferred from interviews with Winnipeg educators concerning reconciliation in education have some overlap with themes also presented in the TRC's "Education for reconciliation" chapter. As well, I have found that the curriculum of the mandatory Grade 11 "History of Canada" course has some gaps in terms of the themes which were coded from my interviews. Therefore, an effort towards decolonizing education would be to improve these areas of the curriculum, while also putting an increased emphasis on relationships; a theme that has been present throughout the literature, previous research, as well as my current research.

Since education was once used as a tool for assimilation in Canada (and elsewhere in the world), it would be beneficial to the reconciliation process if education played a leading role.

Much of the racism and structural violence in Canada stems from a lack of understanding or a misunderstanding of the history and struggles of Indigenous peoples in the land which we now call Canada. Many peace theorists name education and history as important aspects of peacebuilding, therefore it stands that if education and learning history played a bigger role in Canada's road to reconciliation, perhaps the process would be expedited and more sustainable.

The experience of being educated has been traumatic for many Indigenous peoples; therefore, a decolonized education system takes that intergenerational trauma into account and provides space for discussions about these issues and asks questions of students. A decolonized education system is based on relationships and talks about land as something other than a commodity, and takes the possibility of Indigenous sovereignty seriously. An education that works towards reconciliation, decolonization and the end of structural violence also acknowledges the power dynamics that are in play, and how power or the lack of power affects Indigenous peoples.

For this decolonization and reconciliation to become a reality in Canada, people other than students and educators need to be aware of these issues and work collectively on the areas which my research has identified for improvement. Anyone who lives in Canada has a responsibility to learn the history, and has a role in deconstructing the structural violence that facilitates the continued marginalization of Indigenous peoples.

### Connection to Finland and other countries

Canada is not the only country in the world that has treated Indigenous peoples in a similar way. Across the world, Indigenous peoples are more marginalized than other cultural (minority) groups who live in the same country. Comparisons can be made between my research and situations in other countries throughout the world, whether they be former locations of colonization or other places in which Indigenous peoples are marginalized. Learning the truth about history is extremely important everywhere, and history and what we are educated about should not be dictated by the perpetrators of colonization and imperialism nor the people who hold the most power in society. It is important that the powerful and elite learn the stories of the marginalized and vulnerable people in society.

In Finland (and other countries that share Lapland: Sweden and Norway), the Indigenous Sami people were subjected to residential schools and other forms of cultural oppression and marginalization. Norway, Sweden, and Finland have removed Sami people from their

traditional lands, and sent Christian missionaries to establish boarding schools as a means to erase Sami culture (Partida n.d.).

In order to fully comprehend any social issues and difficulties that Sami people face today, it is necessary for people in Finland, Sweden, and Norway to learn about the history and marginalization of the Sami people. One main difference, however, that I see between Sami people and Canadian Indigenous peoples is that the Sami people are largely located in one geographical area (in the northern parts of Finland, Sweden, and Norway), whereas Canadian Indigenous peoples are spread out throughout the country, making them more present and visible to the average Canadian. As well, Sami people are not a visible minority in the same way as Canadian Indigenous peoples.

Indigenous peoples are marginalized in many countries around the world, and in each place it is important for those living in the country to learn about history to better understand the struggles that Indigenous peoples may face and the structural obstacles and oppressors.

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